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AUTHOR Cuban, Larry

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ABSTRACT

This study traces the origin and development of the Cardozo Model School Division, an area of Washington, D.C. having 17,000 poor children. Why did this particular reform shift in aims and alter shape between 1963 and 1972? Three factors played a major role in determining the direction reforms took. First, the particular reform perceptions of policy-makers; second, how each participant conceptualized goals, strategies, and consequences of reform; and third, the policy-making power of each participant to convert ideas into operation. While the push for change came from outside the system, the Superintendent controlled policy-making. His views on the school's role, poverty, and the goals of reform shaped the initial direction the Division took. The subsequent character of the reform seemed to be a reflection, in part, of similarities in Model School Division administrators. But explaining the direction traveled solely in organizational terms would be simplistic. Reformers, for example, lacked common goals and strategies for changing schools; moreover, they did not consider the organizational consequences that would flow from their particular agendas for change. They felt that reform could be achieved easily and quickly. Thus, this institutional study of one effort at reform traces the interaction between reformers and school officials, to explain why a reform became what it was. (Author/JM)

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Final Report

Project No. 2-C-035
Grant No. OEG-3-72-0047

Larry Cuban
Washington School of Psychiatry
1610 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

REFORM IN WASHINGTON: THE MODEL SCHOOL DIVISION, 1963-1972

December, 1972

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE

Office of Education

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Education
National Center for Educational Research and Development

TO BARBARA

WHO KNOWS MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE HOW DIFFICULT

THIS WAS TO BEGIN, AND FINISH.

SHE GAVE FAR MORE THAN UNDERSTANDING.

PREFACE

A most frustrating task confronting any historian is coming to terms with one's values. How to be faithful to sources of information in light of one's belief system is a constant tug-of-war that conscientious investigators wrestle with. I want to share some of my struggle with readers of this study rather than force them to play detective and sniff out my biases.

For almost a decade I have been both a teacher and administrator in the Washington, D.C. public schools. As a participant in the Model School Division, the subject of this study, my perspective was not from the top down, nor from the bottom up, but from somewhere in the middle. I was a Master Teacher of History in the Cardozo Project in Urban Teaching for two years and subsequently directed this project for two additional years. The Cardozo Project was one of a dozen programs in the Model School Division between 1964-1967.

My later years in the school system found me in the central administration as Director of Staff Development between 1968-1970 and since then a classroom teacher. Thus, I have had, for better or worse, a multi-faceted perspective of school affairs; the prism of reality through which I viewed the school system tilted numerous ways.

Many of the people described in this study I knew well. Some I liked; some I admired; some I mistrusted; some I detested. Many of the situations analyzed in this study I participated in. Some in substantive role; some as a peripheral agent; some as an observer. Thus, prior to researching the development of this reform, I had formed definite views as to the processes and participants.

As I began the investigation and moved into writing it up, to my surprise, I discovered that my motivation for the study had shifted. Initially, as an eager reformer, I had set out to draw specific lessons that could be learned from the experience of the Model School Division. I was certain, for example, who were the "good guys" and who were the "bad guys"; I was certain what had succeeded and what had failed and why. After all, I thought, hadn't I been there?

I was wrong. As I plunged into the sources and began to reconstruct what happened, my fervid reformer concern for solving problems somehow shifted to an historian's concern for analysis. The struggle within myself between extracting lessons

and between analysing dispassionately while being aware of my beliefs in the process was painful. What won out was my desire to be faithful and accurate to the sources I used. While I had many axes to grind (and some to bury), digging into the sources compellingly alerted me to avoid substituting my assumptions for conclusions drawn from evidence. To anyone who has wrestled with historical analysis coming into play with personal beliefs, such a struggle should be familiar.

Perhaps a listing of these beliefs, many of which crystalized during the study, might clarify for the reader one side of that struggle. I believe that:

- urban school systems are capable of initiating and sustaining meaningful institutional changes that would improve student performance, the quality of learning, and school climate.

- effective urban school reform is linked to improved life chances for minority and impoverished children.

- effective executive school leadership is a necessary but not sufficient condition for institutional reform to occur.

- schools serve important but limited societal functions. One critical reason for the failure of urban schools is that the nature of the school's limitations as an institution have not been sufficiently spelled out, disseminated and publicly discussed, much less accepted.

- schools should not be expected to solve societal problems; they should be held accountable for what they can do, i.e. teach the full range of cognitive skills, and measurable affective behaviors and creating a pleasant, supportive learning environment for both children and adults. In other words, schools are only one important agent of a child's education; not an instrument of social or individual regeneration.

The other side of this struggle should be revealed in the study itself.

****

Writing incurs all sorts of debts. Repayment, sadly,

can only be in words. I acknowledge gratefully the help of many people of whom only a small number can be named.

The librarians at the Washington Room of the District of Columbia Public Library, the Evening Star, Washington Post and particularly Walter Williams at the District of Columbia Teachers College gave me kind and patient assistance.

Betty Johnson, Nancy Leong, Denise Pendleton and Norine Hinkle--over-burdened, but incredibly efficient D.C. Board of Education employees whose cooperation and smiles made working on the twelfth floor of the Presidential Building more than tolerable. Former Acting Superintendent Benjamin Henley and his Assistant, Bonnie Cohen, unplugged a last-minute administrative clog to my research and for that I thank them. To the Board of Education, of course, goes my appreciation for the leave of absence from the classroom to do the research.

All principals and administrators of the Model School Division who willingly gave of their time, cannot, unfortunately be named. Nor can I acknowledge publicly the many administrators in the system who shared their views with me; rather than jeopardize their position or comfort, they shall remain nameless.

Nancy Harrison and Mary Hunter kindly made the rich files of the D.C. Citizens for Better Public Education available to me. Surprisingly, few researchers have tapped that resource. Virginia Morris was kind enough to help me lug UPO records from the warehouse to her office. Gail Saliterman shared ideas and her files with me. David Manning, a former Roosevelt student of mine, found newspaper sources I could not lay my hands on. Parker Publishing Company kindly permitted me to quote from Carl Hansen's Danger in Washington (West Nyack, New York, 1968).

Friends, Dirk and Lila Ballendorf and Larry and Charlotte Kowitch, consented to act as guinea pigs for my survey instrument. Their tolerance and humor were deeply appreciated.

Acting as judges of responses from administrators, James and Cherry Banks, Richard Ulibarri, Fred Holliday, Joel Merenstein and Larry Kowitch gave up a whole day to wade through fifty pages of verbatim responses and cheerfully (I think) evaluated them.

Mike Kirst and David Tyack gave a careful reading to Chapters 1 and 2. Their comments were useful and stimulating. Also comments from Terry McDonald, Paul Chapman, Gordon Nelson on various sections of the study were helpful.

In a very different way, Janice and Sondra Cuban took my mind off less weighty matters and forced me to attend to family concerns; for their efforts I gladly thank them.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the help Russell Cort gave me. He showed a great deal of patience, tact, wit and--most important--critical intelligence in helping me work through the design of the study and the tricky questions that continually popped up. Bob Kvarnes, a superb, graceful and humane being made it possible for me to apply for the research grant and carry it through free of administrative problems (of course, with a bow to his patient Assistant, Ruth Frank.) For their time and effort, my thanks.

Much as I sometimes would like to implicate all of the kind people who helped me to complete the study, I cannot. They bear no responsibility for the style, content or conclusions. For those, look to me.

Larry Cuban
December, 1972

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface 1

Introduction 5

Chapter 1 Origin and Development of the Model School Division 10
Chronology of key events 22
Amount of funds invested in Model School Division 60

2 Why did the MSD Develop the Way it Did?.... 61

3 Model School Division: Eight Years Later 80

4 Conclusions and Speculations 98

5 Methodology 105

Notes 111

Appendices

A List of Interviewees 130

B Politics of Research 131

C Bibliography 133

D Instructions for Judges 136

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1 Administrative Profile 85

2 Age of Administrators 92

3 Judges' Scores for Scales 93

INTRODUCTION

> In every age there is an impulse to seek understanding of contemporary dilemmas and accomplishments of the past.... This is strong at any time, and it must be particularly powerful in times such as ours, when it seems agreed on all hands that the society is undergoing wrenching transformations. Whatever we may think of the conflict or of historical inquiry which arises immediately from such potent experience, it seems undeniable that for the next generation at least, much work in the history of education will be given over to efforts to better grasp the experience we now live through by understanding how it all came to pass.[1]

School reform is not new.[2] Three major efforts to change urban schools surged through America in the last century and a half. Horace Mann, Henry Barnard and hundreds of local and state reformers dramatically altered the face of mid-19th century public schooling. Compulsory education, secondary and vocational schools and a dozen other changes swept through the nation's schools leaving none untouched. A half-century later, political Progressives allied with school reformers John Dewey, Jane Addams and scores more dragged urban schools into the 20th century. Centralization of board of education authority, professional leadership and a mission to assimilate millions of immigrants drove Progressives to make schooling relevant, efficient and effective. And in the late 1950's and early 60's foundations and the federal government launched a series of social action programs mainly focusing upon schooling. Change has been constant but not necessarily effective.

Reform efforts during this century and a half invariably pressured public schools to cope with the harmful effects of urban life, industrialization, and specifically poverty. In 1851, Henry Barnard unequivocally spoke of the benefits of schooling.

> In the densely populated sections of large cities ... provision should be made for the attendance and appropriate care and instruction of children.... No one at all familiar with the deficient household arrangements and deranged

> machinery of domestic life of the extreme poor and ignorant ... and all the vicious habits of low-bred idleness ... can doubt that it is better for children to be removed as early and as long as possible from such scenes and such examples and placed in an infant or primary school.[3]

His reformer colleague, Horace Mann, went even further. "Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of man--the balance wheel of the social machinery." Moreover, Mann continued, education "prevents being poor ... it would do more than all things else to obliterate factitious distinctions in society."[4]

A generation later, John D. Philbrick, former superintendent of Boston's schools wrote, "The future of our cities will be largely what education makes it and the future of our country will be largely what the cities make it. What but education is to settle the question how far self-government is to be practicable in our populous cities?"[5]

The job of the schools, Progressive educator Ellwood Cubberly concluded was to "assimilate and amalgamate these people (immigrants and minorities) as a part of our American race, and to implant in their children, so far as can be done, the Anglo-Saxon conception of righteousness, law and order...."[6]

And a half century later, influential James Conant, after investigating urban schooling, sounded an alarm.

> I am convinced we are allowing social dynamite to accumulate in our large cities. I am not nearly so concerned about the plight of suburban parents whose offspring are having difficulty finding places in prestige colleges as I am about the plight of parents in the slums whose children either drop out or graduate from school without prospects of either further education or employment. In some slum neighborhoods I have no doubt that over a half of the boys

> between sixteen and twenty-one are out of school and out of work. Leaving aside human tragedies, I submit that a combination of this situation is a menace to the social and political health of large cities.[7]

Past reformers fervently believed that it was the school's task to dig out social warts; moreover, they assumed that the school could do it.

Whether or not the school's job was to end poverty, urban blight and restore social stability, there is no doubt that the school--or, for that matter, any institution--has, ever achieved these ends. Historically, rhetoric has always outstripped performance. Such a self-evident conclusion, however, adds little to available knowledge on reform.

Knowledge about the process of reform, knowledge that can inform policy-makers is scarce. Literature criticizing urban schools, personnel and programs spills over bookshelves; similarly, literature on what strategies and solutions should be pursued are rich in detail, but painfully poor in empirical evidence, logical analysis, or historical perspective. Scarcity exists in research on what the schools can and cannot do.

The major questions on schooling remain unanswered: do students learn what teachers teach? What makes teachers effective? What impact on learning do different curriculum materials have? Classroom organization? Physical arrangements? Can schools make children creative, more humane? Do schools make a difference in childrens' lives? To these questions, dependable answers do not now exist.

Nor are there dependable answers to questions on change. Why do some school systems and not others undertake reform? Why do some school reforms seldom end up the way their advocates dreamed? Can direct federal involvement turn around a school system? What relationship exists between reformers' perception of school change and what later materializes? How does a reform become institutionalized?

This study will not attempt to answer definitively this last set of questions; it will, however, explore possible explanations for what happened in one particular place at one particular point in time, perhaps shedding some light on these questions.

But many critics have pointed out that the real importance of studying past efforts at reform is to examine what happened in the classroom. That, they argue, is where the payoff on reform is. They are, of course, right. Viewing school reform, however, from a slightly different perspective might be useful.

If you assume, for example, that a school system's parts are interrelated--some more strongly than others--and, if you assume that there is a linkage between decisions made at administrative levels with what happens in classrooms--albeit the linkage may be soft or hard depending upon the system--and, finally, if you assume that administrative leadership is a significant component in institutional change then examining how reforms are initiated and shaped by various participants as it proceeds through the organizational structure can help explain what ultimately ends up in classroom practice.

Teachers, instruction, curriculum are critical ingredients in the drama of reform but like a play they make up the final act. The first act describes the conceptualization of reform; the final act lays out what happens in the classroom. Too much of what has been written seems to focus on the ideology and conceptualization of school reform--the first act--with some occasional scenes thrown in from the last act. Seldom do viewers see what happened in detail in the middle of the play.[8] This institutional study attempts to fill part of the gap.

This study will focus on a nationally recognized reform effort, the Model School Division in Washington, D.C. Begun in the feisty mid-1960's, the Model School Division continues in 1972 as a semi-autonomous sub-system. Almost a decade old, a description and analysis of its origin and development may suggest some of the dynamics that characterize institutional reform in one big-city school system.

There is no compulsion to prove that the District of Columbia is like most other big cities in order for generalizations to be made. For one thing, it can't be done. While Washinton contains many of the same ingredients that other cities possess, it is unique. Moreover, the point is not to make D.C. a mirror for other urban systems.[9] The point is to examine carefully the process of change: how the need for change was determined, the struggle between school officials and outsiders, and ambiguity of goals and strategies and the gradual integration of the changes

into the on-going institution. What specifically happened in Washington is, of course, unique; the events are probably unlike those occurring elsewhere. But the direct intervention of the federal government, the phases of reform and the dynamics of the processes suggest common experiences for other big cities; the analysis may enlighten policymakers interested in school reform.

Chapter I

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL SCHOOL DIVISION, 1963-1968

John F. Kennedy had been President of the United States for two years. A nuclear showdown over Russian missiles in Cuba had been nervously averted. James Meredith had been finally admitted to the University of Mississippi. Mobilization for Youth, a multi-million dollar effort to crack the poverty cycle on New York's lower east side was underway. A handful of American advisers was assisting the South Vietnamese to stave off Vietcong advances. Unemployment figures had dipped, but wages were rising. So were prices, although few knew it and even fewer seemed to care. It was 1963. And Washington, D.C. was poised on the threshold of a major battle for the reform of its public schools.

Within a half-decade, Kennedy would be murdered; James Meredith would leave Mississippi only to return, run for political office and lose; Mobilization for Youth would be a tiny, limping organization competing for survival amongst a thicket of anti-poverty organizations; and a half-million GIs would be tied down in Vietnam. Wages would continue to rise, but prices would outdistance them. To the surprise of economists, unemployment figures would also climb upwards. And in Washington, the battle for reform would have been joined, fought and slowly wound down.

****

In 1963, there were 136,000 children in the public schools, of whom 86% were black. The staff was 75% black and on the appointed school board there were five white and four black members.[1] Superintendent Carl Hansen had directed the school system since 1958 and had gained a two-fold national reputation. First, he played a major part in desegregating the District schools in 1953-1955 and, a year later, defended what had happened before a hostile congressional investigation. Second, for instituting a series of instructional reforms the main one being the tracked curriculum and the Amidon Plan in all the schools by 1963; the year, according to Hansen, that

brought an end to "a golden age in Washington education."[2]

To insiders and outsiders alike, Carl Hansen, the Amidon Plan and tracking were synonymous with the D.C. schools. To understand the school system prior to the struggle for reform one must reckon with who Carl Hansen was and what he stood for.

A native mid-westerner and former principal of an Omaha, Nebraska high school, Hansen came to Washington in 1947 as Executive Assistant to Superintendent Hobart Corning. The nation's capital was a rigidly segregated city more akin to Baton Rouge, Louisiana than Boston, Massachusetts. The dual school system prevented teachers, principals and administrators from sharing experiences and working together on common problems. The line of racial etiquette was drawn taut.

Hansen had no knowledge of segregation. On the train eastward, he remembers finding a magazine on the seat next to him which described pictorially the color line in Washington. "For the first time," he said, "I became aware of the degree to which racial segregation was practiced in the nation's capital."[3]

Within the white division of the system, Hansen swiftly moved up the ladder. After being Executive Assistant, he directed all elementary schools, then moved to a similar position for secondary schools and, finally in 1958, to the superintendency. His quick ascent in the bureaucracy was tied to the prominent role he played in gingerly shepherding desegregation through a Board of Education that adhered to the separate but equal letter of the law. "Whenever we moved to contravert existing segregating practices," Hansen said, "we had to do so in such a manner that the Board of Education would not be forced to make an adverse ruling on what had been done."[4] The Board was careful. "They were living in a goldfish bowl," a staff member of the American Friends Service Committee wrote, "...since community opinion was sharply divided they could take no step without serious criticism. They were guided by the opinion of the (city lawyer) that they were operating under a mandate from Congress to operate a dual school system, yet there was no escape from the problems of operating such a system."[5]

The pamphlets Hansen wrote, and his occasional statements to the press on the need for desegregation, often provoked the ire of both superiors and influential southern Congressmen while simultaneously endearing him to local liberals. But he seldom took an ideological liberal or conservative position. In describing how administrators responded to desegregation, Hansen observed that:

> Many felt that everything that could be done to weaken the evil effects of such a system should be done. Others, of course, believed intensely in the correctness of racial segregation by schools. The extremists at either end were the ones who got us into trouble. The best work was done by the reasonable people who felt they could do more for children if they did less for special ideologies.[6]

But one decade's moderation often turns into another year's stubborness. For over the Amidon Plan and tracking, the Superintendent was seldom moderate; he often dug in his heels and refused to budge.

The Amidon Plan (named after a new elementary school built in an urban renewal site) was a "return to the sanity of order and logic in curriculum organization and to the wisdom of teaching subject matter to children in direct and effective manner, using with judgment what is known about how we learn."[7] Stressing phonics, order and discipline in tightly prescribed periods of instruction, the plan was teacher-centered. Under the plan, the teacher moves to center stage and orchestrates the class. "She returns to the front of the room," he wrote, "with

> chalk in hand to explain, discuss, reinforce learning by immediate check on class responses.... From the wealth of her own scholarship she helps her class to see connections between the known and the unknown, giving meaning to what otherwise may be missed by the pupil and taken for granted by the teacher.[8]

Tracking or the "variable curriculum" was introduced into the high schools in 1956, in the junior high and elementary schools in 1958.[9] Hypothetically, children were assigned to tracks according to their ability as revealed by intelligence,

and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, etc. This form of ability grouping was an attempt to tailor curriculum and instruction to individual differences. If tests masked a student's ability or a student demonstrated marked improvement in one track, hypothetically, movement into the next higher track was possible. Downward movement, of course, could occur also.

Hansen's pedagogical convictions were strengthened by the belief that professional educators possessed the training and experience to guide local school affairs. Professionalism was dear to the Superintendent. When he was attacked by critics, Hansen lashed back at "those who demand innovations and new and imaginative ideas yet speak in the thin voice of dilettantes ... of benchwarmers."[10] Of the more persistent critics, especially those with federal clout, he said,

> There are people who sit in the offices of the Office of Economic Opportunity and in the Office of Education who believe that they have a kind of omniscience--that they can see and do what ought to be done for the good of the whole country. They have said that to me (when)... I protested certain requirements which intruded upon the rights of boards of education to make appointments and to conduct the operation of the Head Start program.... So in the quiet of their offices they make patterns for education around the country. The intention may be good, but I think the objective is tremendously dangerous to the very essence of our freedom, which is that schools be decentralized and locally operated.[11]

The Superintendent's beliefs about what was best for students were reinforced by his convictions that professional schoolmen should make the necessary educational decisions.

By 1963, Carl Hansen's educational philosophy and program dominated the system. It did because Hansen dominated decision-making. The Superintendent and his staff defined the policy issues, produced the alternatives and the research to support each alternative, drew up the formal agenda for each meeting, and recommended specific policy choices. The Board of Education complied. In effect, the Superintendent determined who got what, when and where. These were the years, of course,

of strong superintendents--Herbert Brownell in Detroit, Benjamin Willis in Chicago and Hansen in Washington--all of whom were sitting atop of large school systems undergoing profound shifts in population and unready to cope with these consequences.

For in 1963, Carl Hansen, a man respected by associates for his integrity, admired (and hated) for his fearless and snappy decisions and recognized by both friend and critic as the man who runs the D.C. schools--this man was confronted by eager reformers.

Professional Reformers at Work

In the late 1950's when few major social changes could be initiated with a conservative President and divided Congress, professional reformers in public and private agencies, aware of the inequalities in American life, had begun to agree upon a focus for reform: revitalize the dying city; transform urban decay into growth; take deteriorating "grey area" institutions and invest them with the breath of life; convert citizen apathy into hope and, in the process, preserve social stability. The director of Ford Foundation's Public Affairs Program, Paul Ylvisaker, described the job in terms of three imperatives:

> . of trying to mesh the policies and operations of separate public and private jurisdictions.
>
> . of working with disadvantaged and minority groups, particularly the Negro community.
>
> . of looking beyond old and fixed ways of doing things, to invent and evaluate new approaches in education, housing, employment, legal services and welfare.[12]

Ford grants to ten school systems (Washington was one) in the early 60's--the Great Cities Projects--produced a multitude of team teaching, pre-kindergarten, remedial reading and community school projects. These initial educational grants were in Ylvisaker's words, "a stepping stone to larger grants that would stimulate broader and more coherent community approaches to the physical and human problems of the grey areas."[13]

But the professional reformers in foundations, universities and government didn't have the next stone to step to. Clearly, they felt that the school system or for that matter any single, established urban institution could not implement a creative approach combining public and private services to solve

the problems of the city. A new kind of agency unburdened by narrow vested interests or political constituency was needed. Not public, not private, yet possessing the capacity to coordinate both domains while catalysing the total community to take action in its behalf.

The development and growth of a non-profit corporation established by both public and private agencies called Mobilization for Youth (MFY) on the lower east side of New York City offered a model of an agency for community action. Reformers at Ford were captivated. They invested in MFY. They spread the MFY word in reform-minded circles. By December, 1961, the first of six grants to similar quasi-public corporations to reform grey areas was made to Oakland, California. Ford money would come to Washington within two years.

With the election of John F. Kennedy, New Frontiersmen turned to an attack on urban problems, the most compelling, and very political, being youth crime or the "social dynamite" of the slums. The President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime (PCJD) was established in May, 1961.

Vigorous intellectual traffic between Ford and PCJD staff often resulted in similar information and assumptions about urban problems and the strategies to solve them. And as events moved swiftly, joint grants were made to cities. One close observer of both agencies flatly said that Ford executives sold the MFY approach to the President's Committee staff.[14] Another observer of the Boston scene in 1962 concluded that the two staffs were "collaborating so closely as to be almost indistinguishable."[15] Committed to rational planning prior to program operation, PCJD was heavily influenced by the theories of scholars Lloyd Ohlin and Richard Cloward.[16] Interestingly enough, Ohlin moved to a top staff position with PCJD shortly after its inception.

As Ford had moved from solo grants to big city school systems to a search for another instrument, preferably a planning and coordinating one, PCJD moved from a primary focus on delinquency to an attack on poverty through a similar instrument. A November, 1963 memorandum from David Hackett, Executive Director of PCJD to Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, chairman of the President's Committee, described the intellectual move, as well as an analysis of the problem.

> In our work on the Juvenile Delinquency program, we have learned that programs for the prevention and control of delinquency must deal not only with the delinquents, but also with disadvantaged youths who may become delinquent unless there is substantial intervention on their behalf. Such an approach is broad, encompassing many young people, and concentrating on their environment--the family, the school, the local labor market, etc.
>
> This comprehensive approach precludes the use of traditional concepts and plans which call for dealing merely with the delinquent in uncoordinated programs. It requires the development of new opportunities for the disadvantaged youth and change in the institutions which affect them. To create this kind of program, the President's Committee has encouraged local planning, leading to a coordination of resources for a total attack on the problems of disadvantaged youth.
>
> ...Because of the intimate relationship between poverty and crime our comprehensive programs of delinquency prevention and control have inevitably led to attempts to deal with poverty and its effects. The Juvenile Delinquency program has emphasized access to opportunity for youth as a way of combatting poverty; thus the Juvenile Delinquency program has, in fact, concentrated its resources on attacks on poverty in selected target cities.[17]

David Hackett's access to the Attorney General and through him, the President, gave enormous clout to the PCJD far beyond what a tiny staff and modest budget could wield. To attack poverty, reform urban institutions and thereby reduce delinquency, PCJD believed deeply that a rational analysis of the problems linked to securing commitments to change from institutional leaders expressed in carefully planned demonstration projects in selected cities would be an ideal strategy to ultimately effect basic change.

THE STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF REFORM: WAY VS. DCPS (1963-1964)

In early 1963, Washington Action for Youth (WAY)--a planning organization funded by the PCJD--rented offices in a drab gray building two blocks from the White House. By the time cherry blossoms bloomed on the Tidal Basin, Carl Hansen and WAY had locked horns.

In one sense, such a confrontation was predictable. The new director of WAY was Jack Goldberg who, in the words of the Washington Post, was both "dynamic and abrasive."[18] Younger than Hansen, used to working with sleeves rolled up and pungent language, Goldberg was trained as a social worker and therapist. Experienced in New York settlement house work, Goldberg fervently believed that institutions, especially schools, needed changing and must be shoved off dead center. "We aren't just another study," he said, "to put on top of some file cabinet; we really want to know what makes the people in the community tick, what the power structure is, where the political pressures are."[19]

Hansen, a man who seldom loosened his tie, took off his suitcoat in public or dropped a four-letter word was the opposite in style. Moreover, Hansen deeply resented outside interference in the making of school policy.

In a larger sense, the clash was inevitable. Given WAY's analysis of school problems, their proposed strategies, and their belief in controlling the reform process contrasted with Hansen's beliefs that the system was making substantial progress in dealing with problems and schoolmen, not outsiders, should manage the process of change--a collision course was predictable.

Funded by PCJD, and sharing most of its assumptions about delinquency and poverty, WAY concluded that "parents and youth in low-income neighborhoods do not lack knowledge of the 'good life' and its benefits, but that the opportunity channels for fulfilling their aspirations are blocked."[20] How to open up these channels? "What is clearly needed in human renewal," the final WAY report concluded, "is an approach which operates on the institutional systems as well as on the individual to effect change at the local community level."[21] More was expected than mere influence on institutions. WAY programs were "geared toward changing institutional systems to make them more relevant to the needs of persons in (poor areas) and more understanding and accepting of these persons."[22]

And the schools? The WAY report was unequivocal.

> One institution requiring modification ... is the school system. This is the basic agency to which all youth are exposed and which can prepare them for entry into an increasingly complex society. The school must take over additional functions and it must strengthen existing ones...[23]

More than the Superintendent's expertise was at issue. There was more to this struggle than, simply, professionals resenting outside interference. Power to control the reform process was at stake. Discrediting school professionals would inevitably lead to the Superintendent losing his grip on the school decision-making machinery; Amidon and tracking would be endangered. Thus, Hansen and Goldberg symbolized a power struggle between professionals and outside lay reformers that had periodically marked attempts to change urban school systems since the late 19th century.

Shortly after Goldberg's arrival, a target area for WAY pilot programs was chosen. The Cardozo area was selected, Goldberg said, because it represented a cross-section of District problems "not because it was a jungle."[24] There was, however, much left unsaid. Although the Cardozo area, a brisk walk from the White House, contained, as most black ghetto areas do, a substantial portion of homeowning, middle-class Negroes who deeply resented the slum label that tagged the area, Cardozo contained all the depressing indices of poverty in full measure. But more important, Goldberg's choice was political. How so?

What angered the Superintendent about the choice of Cardozo over a half-dozen other similar impoverished areas, was that he didn't make the decision. Had he done so, Cardozo would not have been selected. Hansen knew that the principal of Cardozo High School, Dr. Bennetta B. Washington, was a close personal friend of Goldberg and one of the early critics of his administration. Her ties in the affluent black community were substantial and not to be ignored. Goldberg wanted Cardozo for precisely those reasons.

WAY's intervention and Goldberg's style led to a series of turbulent meetings between him and the Superintendent. Goldberg recalls those early meetings.

> We had a few face-to-face confrontations. We talked about the track system. We raised all the classic questions, you know the inequality of resources at Western High School (a predominately white school in an affluent area) and the rest of the city. He said he would think about it, but never did anything. He kept procrastinating. He had the attitude that who the hell are you guys to tell me what to do. You know the professional educator idea. What also bothered him was the Cardozo-WAY alliance (that is Bennetta B. Washington, principal of the high school and close friend of Goldberg). Bennetta was strictly on his shit list. So you see we tried to go through this process with him and as we did, it heightened the differences between him as a professional administrator and us. Here was federal intervention of a professional administrator in the Cardozo area. He said he didn't like Cardozo to begin with and now with you people I even like it less. He said I (Hansen) would do anything I could to defend myself from you. And he did.[25]

In an effort to repair the break between the schools and WAY, Goldberg hired William Rumsay, a teacher tapped by Hansen to act as liason between the public schools and the new agency. Relations, however, continued to worsen.

After WAY had launched in a blaze of publicity some summer pilot programs in teacher-training, employment and delinquency prevention, the simmering conflict erupted in October when WAY submitted to Hansen twenty proposals to reform schooling in the Cardozo area.

Basically, WAY packaged a series of federally-funded programs including teacher, principal and counselor training, parent involvement, increased emphasis on vocational education and ungraded primaries in the elementary schools--all of which were to be lumped together into an experimental sub-system located in the Cardozo area.

At Franklin, an old elementary building converted into administrative headquarters, fury greeted the proposals. Severe criticism by school officials centered on the WAY proposals as being either financially unrealistic, sloppily planned, variations of what they had always sought but lacked funds to implement or, that the whole package was "usurping" powers of the Board of Education and Superintendent.[26]

Hansen was worried about these proposals for a number of reasons. Money was urgently needed and Federal funds could not be easily rejected; the clout of the Attorney-General and the White House was enormous and political pressure for cooperation was building up. More and more influential people in Washington were criticizing his policies.

Yet, by January, 1964, when Hansen recommended to the Board a substantively revised WAY package it was clear that Hansen had whipped WAY.

What saved the Superintendent, permitting him to brush aside the first attack upon his control over policy-making was the assassination of the President. The director of WAY recalled:

> I went to the Attorney General and told him that, in my judgment, I didn't think that this guy (Hansen) was movable. The Attorney-General accepted our perception of the situation. Then the assassination came along. On the day of the assassination we had set up a meeting between Hansen, the Attorney-General and some school people, the guy from Detroit and others to discuss the possibilities of change. We had this meeting scheduled; it was D-Day for Hansen. The game plan was set for that very day to see if Hansen could be budged. The message to Hansen was going to be: Look, Mac, either you pick up your marbles and get out or you stay here and do it the way we want you to do it.[27]

Hansen didn't have to pick up his marbles. Less than two months after Dallas, the Superintendent recommended to the Board a compromise plan costing almost one and a half million dollars to establish an "Inner-City Target Area." Incorporating some of the WAY proposals along with those of his staff, Hansen recommended a series of compensatory programs that supported the existing structure, making no major changes. The programs included efforts aimed at pre-schoolers and high-school dropouts--focussing, as most programs across the nation did, on the "culturally-deprived" child, not the system. Of importance, howevever, was the implicit admission that existing school programs were inadequate in meeting the needs of the inner-city youth.

According to the Board of Education minutes for that January meeting, the Director of WAY agreed that the "content of the program would be clearly the responsibility of the Superintendent and Board of Education."[28] Who would head up the new target area program? WAY wanted to choose the person. But Hansen emphatically stated for the record that "Board policy does not limit the administration to select anyone from the city school system. However ... it is not probable that a candidate for this position coming from the outside would over-qualify anyone within the system...."[29] Goldberg, at this point, powerless to even see the compromise document prior to the Board meeting, could only answer a Board member's question about the revised plans,

> I think we are moving in the correct direction. If we can move as quickly as we can to implement the total program--although it will take much time to get into the planning phase of it as quickly as possible-- and assuming we are going to come up with top echelon people, I think we have a good ball game going.[30]

Privately, Goldberg felt differently.

> What came out of it was not a fundamental change.... Some partial stuff came out but Hansen was sitting on top of the goddam bag.... After the assassination, we were dead ducks. He knew it.... I had no more power base. Whatever compromises and changes that were worked out came as a result of internal pressures and accomodation with the black community.[31]

Within six months, Goldberg had resigned and returned to New York. In the meantime, President Lyndon B. Johnson had called for an all out war on poverty; Ford Foundation had invested planning money for a possible "grey" area grant to Washington and abrasive WAY was swallowed up by an umbrella non-profit corporation poised to assume the anti-poverty role for the city called the United Planning Organization.

Hansen brushed aside this first direct thrust at his grip over policy-making. "I think Jack Goldberg," the Superintendent concluded, "handled us in the schools the wrong way.... His approach was negative. Change in the schools was his chief cure for juvenile delinquency. Schools were mainly the cause of youth crimes. If he had come at us more constructively, we might have been easier to work with."[32]

CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS

1963

- Washington Action for Youth (WAY) organized; Jack Goldberg appointed Director; Cardozo designated as target area.
- Confrontation between WAY Director and school Superintendent Carl Hansen.
- Ford Foundation makes initial grant for "Grey Areas" Program Planning; James Banks heads up planning unit.
- President John F. Kennedy assassinated.

1964

- Compromise school plan for Cardozo area agreed upon between WAY and public schools
- Goldberg resigns; Banks appointed Director of United Planning Organization (UPO), a coordinating agency to plan urban change for Washington.
- Panel on Educational Research and Development (PERD) report "Innovation and Experiment in Education" published.
- D.C. Board of Education adopts "Model Sub-system" concept from PERD report for the Cardozo target area; Norman Nickens appointed temporary head of sub-system; blue-ribbon committee appointed to advise Nickens, Hansen and Board of Education.
- Civil Rights Act and Economic Opportunity Act passed.
- United Planning Organization named to coordinate local war on poverty.

1965

- Growing criticism of Hansen's track system.
- Model School Division (MSD) begins operation with grant from UPO.

- Track system modified.

- UPO Director and Model School Division Advisory Committee meet to map out strategy of change for D.C. schools.

- Board of Education approves MSD as a decentralized district; more autonomy granted.

- Congressional investigation of anti-poverty programs, including MSD begun; Advisory Committee Chairman blasts MSD in letter to Congressional investigating committee Chairman.

- UPO Task Force formed to review education policy.

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act funds from government become available.

1966

- Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) cut back UPO grants.

- Court suit claiming that Track system and schools discriminated against black and poor children filed in federal court by Julius Hobson.

- Congressional report on anti-poverty programs blasts MSD; Advisory Committee report "Strategy of Change" also criticizing MSD leaked to local press.

- Chairman of Advisory Committee resigns; Committee folds.

- Board of Education authorizes Superintendent to contract with Columbia University to study D.C. schools; report to be completed by June, 1967.

- UPO Task Force recommends termination of MSD funding.

- New Board of Education appointees increasingly hostile to Hansen's policies and programs.

- Hansen's recommendation to the Board to establish another Track rejected.

1967

- UPO Board of Trustees votes to end funding for MSD
- Banks resigns.
- Hansen re-appointed as Superintendent on a 5-4 vote.
- Student boycott of D.C. schools; less than 500 students involved.
- Columbia University Study of the schools issued.
- Hobson v. Hansen decision delivered by Federal District Judge Skelly Wright.
- Hansen resigns.
- Board of Education extends more autonomy for MSD; planning funds granted to Division for first time; the sub-system formally institutionalized.

A DIFFERENT TACK ON REFORM: PANEL ON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT, 1964

To a degree, the Superintendent was right. Two other governmental agencies, eager to reform the D.C. schools did approach him "constructively" in the Spring and Summer of 1964 and did find he was easier "to work with." Before describing what happened, a few words about the times is necessary.

Submitted to a Congress and country still reeling from the impact of President Kennedy's murder, Johnson's poverty and civil rights legislation swept through committee hearings ending up in legislation with little public debate. An irrestible flood of rhetoric poured fourth. "We can win the War Against Poverty," Sargent Shriver soon-to-be appointed director of the Office of Economic Opportunity declared, "because we have the tools, we have the know-how, and we have the will."[33] Optimism spilled over with the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Racial discrimination was solved, many believed. Within this national context--remember due to its location Washington resonated vibrantly to federal interests--the President's Panel on Educational Research and Development and the United Planning Organization negotiated with Carl Hansen for reform.

The Panel was an advisory unit created by the President's Science Advisory Committee. Having no operational function or funds, the Panel's chief aim was to suggest possible directions government agencies involved in education could pursue. Throughout 1963 and early 1964, the Panel held a series of seminars on pressing issues in education, one being devoted to the "Deprived and Segregated." Hansen or his Executive Assistant, Norman Nickens attended all of these meetings.[34]

At one of these meetings in September, 1963, or roughly at the same time that the Cardozo target area had been identified and the Goldberg-Hansen polarization had already occurred, a new idea for organizing change in urban school systems was proposed. "The idea," Joseph Turner, Staff Assistant for the Panel and its chief advocate, "of establishing an autonomous, experimental subsystem within a big city school system grew out of (the) two-week seminar....

> The sub-system would include a high school and all the junior high schools and elementary schools that fed into it which altogether would mean somewhere between 5,000 and 20,000 students. Although still under the overall authority of the school superintendent, the sub-system under

its own director would be free to conduct its affairs independently of the rest of the system.[35]

At this meeting, according to Turner, the District was suggested as a site for such an experiment. A number of panelists from Washington warmly pushed the idea. Hansen and Nickens, either or both, attended all subsequent meetings. Nickens had already squired Turner and Panel member Marcus Raskin on a tour of the D.C. schools. The District schools looked like a sound choice. But a sound choice for what? What would this sub-system do that was not being done by the overall system? According to the Panel report, a different reform strategy was necessary since over-centralization and excessive bureaucracy stifled innovation.

> Nongraded schools, team teaching and other lines of institutional innovation are fruitful, but in terms of the total problem the steps taken so far have been modest. A new unit of research and development is needed. With (a subsystem in a big city) as an unobstructed testing-ground new programs can be developed, not in isolation, but in concert and on a proper scale, with provision for rapid feedback and rapid exploitation of new opportunities as they occur.... The management of the system itself will also be the subject of experiment....
>
> Within a big city system, a model subsystem would report directly to the superintendent of schools. The subsystem would have its own lay advisory council or 'board,' including members of the school staff, members of academic faculties of universities,and artists, musicians, writers, lawyers, etc.[36]

WAY had recommended the creation of an "Inner City Target Area" for piloting of its proposed programs. The Board has already approved Hansen's choice for its directorship (Dr. Bennetta Washington had applied but Goldberg, at this time, was powerless to influence the decision). Dr. Paul Cooke, a professor of English at District of Columbia Teachers College, the new director, held meetings with principals and teachers and was trying to implement the compromise list of WAY-DC schools proposals. Turner, Raskin and others met with Hansen and Nickens, encouraging them to broaden the initial target area idea into the model subsystem concept of the Panel.[37]

Implicit promises of substantial funding were made to school officials. And with the developing anti-poverty legislation, more funds would be coming into the District via the agency designated to coordinate the local war on poverty; conditions seemed to support movement toward broader, comprehensive action.

On June 11, 1964, Hansen recommended to a sub-committee of the Board the establishment of a "model school sub-system" and advisory council within the Washington public schools. Joseph Turner, who drafted the Superintendent's recommendation testified in its behalf.[38] One week later, the Board approved the plan.

Had Hansen embraced the reform ideology? No. Yet to read the document submitted to the Board, one would think so. The report to the Board details the creation of the target area, but points out "that our original concept began to grow and to change until we began to ask ourselves if this plan were bold enough, imaginative enough and flexible enough to accomplish our goals."[39] Citing the Panel's report, the Superintendent concluded that the concept of a model sub-system "has created greater potential for total impact in conjunction with a community action program than did the original concept."[40] Finally, the recommendation said:

> The hope is to develop effective patterns of schooling that can be adopted at considerably less expense by other parts of the school system and by other school systems across the nation. Much work still needs to be done in developing and implementing this idea....[41]

In effect, Turner had drafted for Hansen the Panel's chief recommendations.

Yet, Hansen said he had other motives than reform in mind when he recommended the plan to the Board.

> Help from any source was what I wanted--foundations like Ford, much bootlicking required; Congress, the controllers of the local purse; the White House, the executive branch, which seemed to offer now (i.e. model subsystem) a new means of support I wanted to tap for all it was worth. I doubt that I have the instinct of a highway man, but I was rapacious to a fault where the schools were concerned. We hoped for money for the schools from this kind of White House

> interest.... I proposed to the Board of Education that it set up a model subsystem with Cardozo....
>
> "Money? 'Where is it coming from?' Are you going to take it away from the rest of the school system?' 'Are you going to advantage the Cardozo group by robbing the rest of the city schools?' Members of the Board of Education asked.... 'Never,' I said, dogmatically. 'There is promise of money from other sources: from the executive branch, maybe the Office of Education, the poverty programs, foundations. The sponsors are talking about as much as $10 million extra for the model subsystem.[42]

The hope for additional monies and the accelerating pace of events, especially the imminent Economic Opportunity Act, apparently pressured Hansen to come up with something he could keep on top of. WAY scars were still fresh. But his haste in adopting the Panel's main recommendations led to a series of skirmishes that seriously eroded his prestige and ultimately helped force his resignation three years later.

THE POLITICS OF GETTING STARTED: THE FIRST YEAR, 1964-1965

Whatever motives or pressures there were, a model subsystem was born. That it would be under the control of Hansen had been answered by the struggle with WAY and the manner in which Turner and Panel members approached and dealt with the Superintendent. In August, 1964 when the Superintendent chose Norman Nickens, his trusted Executive Assistant to become the acting Assistant Superintendent of the infant Model School Division (MSD), the uncertain was confirmed.

A native Washingtonian, Norman Nickens had traveled the route that other able blacks were compelled to follow in a segregated system. Graduated from Dunbar High School (the academic high school for blacks) and Miners Teachers College (the black institution for training of teachers), he taught in a series of junior high schools. Promoted to Assistant Principal in 1956 and Principal a year later, in 1962, at the age of 41 he was tapped to be Hansen's Executive Assistant. Fair-skinned,Nickens was often mistaken for white, especially by those New Frontiersmen and anti-poverty warriors unfamiliar with black people and Washington.

His relations with Hansen were excellent. "I signed," Nickens said, "all of his letters, handled all of his congressional correspondence. He would trust you ... and back you up all the way."[43] Nickens admired Hansen's steadfastness, integrity and leadership. Hansen's estimate of Nickens was equally admiring. He is "gifted, sensitive and experienced in local school management and in city-wide administration as well...."[44] And to the Washington Post, Nickens was "a quiet spoken but determined educator who works hard and accomplishes a great deal but stays out of the limelight."[45]

While real control of the scope, character and direction of the reform would never be more than a few doors away from Nickens' office in the Franklin Building, the magic optimism of the times swept early pronouncements to the heights of reform hopes.[46] The new Assistant Superintendent called the MSD "revolutionary;" he criticized educators who objected to schools taking on the job of home and church, saying "when you get right down to it, if the schools don't do these jobs what other agency will."[47]

The first year shaped the direction that MSD would take for the next five years. Constantly conferring with Hansen, and often acting as his representative, Nickens shepherded through four key developments: guidelines for the establishment of the MSD and the report of a number of consultants (hereafter called the Harvard report); the creation of a blue-ribbon advisory council; the submission of the first MSD proposal to the United Planning Organization (UPO), the designated coordinating agency for the War on Poverty and recent recipient of a large 'grey' area Ford grant and, finally, the definition of authority for MSD.[48] A brief look at each should capture the hectic, complex character of those critical early months of the MSD

Guidelines for the MSD and the Harvard Report

Shortly after the Board approved the MSD in June, Hansen met with the Director of UPO to line up consultants to draft an administrative structure for the new sub-system.[49] Some flesh had to be put on the bones served up by the Panel Report.

At the initial meeting of consultants school officials and UPO staff, Nickens presented guidelines that he had composed and the Superintendent had agreed to for the consultants to use in framing their recommendations. The key ones were:

- The 'model school system' remains an integral part of the regular school system.

- The Assistant Superintendent will have autonomy in the introduction of new programs; curriculum materials; supportive services, etc., with the approval of the Superintendent and Board of Education, working closely at all times with the Superintendent's staff.

- The Assistant Superintendent will have autonomy in recommending the appointment of personnel beyond the regular budgetary staffing....

- Existing school programs...will be implemented and expanded in the 'model school system.' We will use the best of existing school programs and not innovate for the sake of innovation or for change alone.

- Research and evaluation will be included for every program....[50]

The resulting Harvard Report accepted these guidelines as a framework for their conclusions. The Report submitted in September recommended that

> What is needed is the usual school budget and allocation procedures operating through regular channels <u>plus</u> special programs and funding mechanisms which recognize the <u>extra-school</u> (original emphasis) dimensions of the required effort. In stating this there is no implication that such extra programs are not to be considered of as much concern to the duly responsible school authorities as the so-called regular programs. Rather it is presumed that the nature of these programs is such that they have to have a wide freedom of application which goes far beyond the usual budgetary justification procedures. Certainly once these newer programs have completed their experimental stage and have been evaluated they may then proceed to assume their part in the 'regular' program and budget wherever applicable.[51]

In short, MSD would be responsible to regular school demands and constraints.

The consultants also took the Panel report recommendations on a lay advisory council and suggested that such a council be established. As to its powers and duties, the report stated:

> The Advisory Committees shall thoroughly inform itself as to the regular operation, personnel and special projects presently involved or proposed for future involvement by the Model System....
>
> After ... administrative analysis, proposed projects will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee. Those projects which are deemed of value to the Model System and Community shall be presented by the Advisory Committee to the Board of Education....[52]

The consultants' report, in effect, retreated from the Panel recommendations in two significant directions. First, it accepted and strenghened Nickens' guidelines concerning MSD remaining an integral part of the larger system, thereby rejecting the Panel's stress upon the sub-system's near-total autonomy to innovate. Second, the Panel's recommendation that the lay advisory council's main task was to provide "cooperative direction (my emphasis) of a comprehensive experiment"[53] was rejected by the consultants in favor of a board that reviewed and advised but did not determine policy for the sub-system. Both recommendations of the consultants were satisfactory to the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. Hansen, however, did not find all the recommendations satisfactory. The report urged that an Operations Committee made up of institutional leaders outside of the schools, but including Hansen and Nickens, be a steering committee with certain broad powers over the model sub-system. Consultants strongly urged in-service training. "First priority," the report stated, "should be given to the ... training of principals and key instructional personnel."[54] Teacher-training was second priority. Also, the Report urged funding at the level of $1500 per pupil or twice what was being currently spent.[55] These and other recommendations, Hansen ignored.

Advisory Council

The first few months of the Advisory Council's existence determined its ultimate influence. The presence of a prestigious thirteen member blue-ribbon citizens committee[56] anxious to get started and begin implementing the June 11 action of the Board proved troublesome to Hansen and Nickens. The issue, again, was who was going to make policy.

Would the citizens committee end up determining the direction of the Model School Division? After wrestling with WAY and winning, Hansen was not about to let policy-making power over an infant experiment slip into another group's hands.

Six weeks after the Board approved the Advisory Council, yet one month before the consultants submitted their preliminary report, Hansen wrote the President of the Board:

> The Committee, in my opinion, will serve as advisor in the main. It will meet perhaps no more than once a month to react to ideas having to do with the development of the model school system and to submit suggestions for consideration by the school staff and the Board of Education.[57]

The Harvard Report, unsurprisingly, reached the same conclusion. When Chairman Judge David T. Bazelon complained bitterly to UPO and school officials over the limits imposed upon the Advisory Council's role, its lack of staff and a budget, a UPO staff member wrote the chief consultant, Donald Mitchell, and asked for clarification of the Council's role. Mitchell replied:

> Quite frankly, if this committee had not already been appointed (when we were asked to serve) we probably would not have recommended its establishment at this stage.
>
> At no time did we nor would we at this time recommend 'broad responsibilities' for the Advisory Committee. We see its role as one of being continually informed as to what is going on in the Model School system and lending its wisdom to the professional staff at appropriate points.... We can see no

> advantage and many potential disadvantages in any proposal which would set up the Advisory Committee in such a manner as to have its own budget, staff and consultants completely independent from existing agencies.[58]

A copy of the letter was sent to Hansen.

In November, Hansen submitted his recommendations on the Advisory Council to the Board. Except for the Advisory Council members who were not even informed of the Board meeting, few staff close to the Superintendent were surprised. The recommendations approved by the Board left the Advisory Council advising, nothing else. Or as the Council's Executive Assistant concluded "without any useful function."[59]

Former Executive Assistant to the Council, Gail Saliterman, summed up how the school system, specifically, Hansen with Nickens carrying out the strategy, "under the guise of supporting change" erected five different barriers to block meaningful citizen involvement in the management of the sub-system.

- delaying the first Advisory Committee meeting (the first meeting took place three months after the Council was appointed).

- diluting potential power of committee by appointing other committees. (Consultants' group, parent and teacher committees).

- limiting the information available to the committee. (Nickens or a member of his tiny staff did not attend all meetings; proposals were given to Council a few weeks before submission, making revision impossible).

- limiting funds. (Money to hire an executive assistant was not appropriated until March, 1965, six months after the Council's first meeting. Up to that point, Judge Bazelon privately provided funds to hire Saliterman, a secretary, consultants and purchase supplies in order to keep the Council functioning. Hansen refused to "submit a request for funds since he felt committee should be free from any ties that might censor its opinions and advice."

. appealing to legitimate legal restrictions that limit the possibilities of change (i.e. Congressional legislation for the District schools mandated that only the Board can determine policy and approve programs; no other body can be delegated that power.)[60]

Power and authority were, of course, at the heart of the matter. School officials were not about to surrender policy-making power to a citizens' group, particularly after the WAY experience.

The Advisory Committee, however, continually asked for power. Louise Steele, member of the Board of Education and the Advisory Committee, repeatedly said at Council meetings that "the School Board will not give you power to do these things; they can't."[61] Legally she was right. After Hansen had submitted his recommendations on the Advisory Committee and they were reported in the press, Bazelon wrote again to Wesley Williams, President of the Board.

> If the Committee is not to exercise independent judgment in planning for the Model School Sub-system, I would question whether it has any useful function to serve or whether it would merely be window dressing aimed at obtaining additional funds for District of Columbia Schools.[62]

Except for the energetic activities of its Executive Assistant,[63] the Advisory Council was little more than "window dressing." The United Planning Organization, at this time more concerned about keeping Hansen's good will, maintained neutrality which, in effect, buttressed the school system's position. Less than a year later, a member of the Advisory Committee wrote Bazelon:

> Dear David:
>
> What I am about to suggest may have been crossing your mind for some time. I would like to ask that the Steering Committee to the Model School System (Advisory Council) consider recommending its own abolishment and sending such a recommendation to the Board of Education and the United Planning Organization ....[64]

in its frustration, all the Council could do was to turn to other sources of power for leverage.

When a Congressional investigating committee announced an up-coming probe of the use of anti-poverty funds in D.C., Bazelon, in desperation, wrote to Congressmen Adam Clayton Powell and Roman Pucinski, Chairmen of the investigation. In the letter, Bazelon blasted the Superintendent, administration of the MSD and the Board of Education for failing to honor their commitment to improve schooling for black, poor children. He recommended specific kinds of reforms that, he felt, should occur.[65] Many of the specific issues raised by Pucinski during the hearings came directly from the letter.

A few months later, "Strategy for Change," a sharply-worded history of the sub-system, written by Saliterman was leaked to the local press. Richly documented, well-written but harshly critical the conclusions were similar to the earlier Bazelon letter. Calling the experiment a failure, the document made headlines for a few weeks. But nothing else much happened. Post and Star editorials and news coverage was influenced by the Committee insofar as their criticisms often found a forum in their pages. While their direct influence was limited, the Committee, through these various forms of indirect influence, did shove Hansen to further expand the initially narrow concept of autonomy.[66] Few other concrete accomplishments, however, emerged from the Committee's efforts.

By mid-1966, the Advisory Council stopped meeting; it slid slowly into oblivion. Nickens must have breathed a sigh of relief for he was a man knocked back and forth between loyalty to his boss and advocacy of reform. Nickens did testify before the Congressional Committee that:

> I have met with (Bazelon) on a regular basis since last October (1964).... Then from time to time we have had task forces which were set up in the Advisory Committee. One particularly was for the development new programs. I met regularly on that and with any of the others that wanted to meet with them. The services of the Advisory Committee have been excellent. And the relationship I think has been very good.[67]

Looking back, however, he could say "fortunately, it didn't last long."[68]

First Education Proposals Submitted to UPO

By August, 1964, when the Economic Opportunity Act was signed into law, school officials already knew that UPO would be designated coordinator of anti-poverty activities in the metropolitan area. As early as the mid-June recommendation to the Board for a model sub-system, Hansen and Nickens knew that new federal money would be coming into the District. "The Superintendent," the recommendation read, "believes that the concept of a model sub-system has greater potential for total impact in conjunction with a community action program than did the original concept."[69] Community action, of course, was the heart of the new Office of Economic Opportunity's (OEO) program.

Meetings between Hansen, Nickens and James Banks, Executive Director of UPO had been going on since early Spring. The strategy of employing outside consultants to design administrative machinery for the MSD was cleared with and financed by UPO. Banks had appointed three members to the Advisory Council.

During the summer, the first draft of Model School system proposals had been worked on by Nickens, Paul Cooke and Barbara Hazel. Working in un-airconditioned offices, often late at night, they pulled together a document for Board approval in late September prior to submission to UPO. Rumors and criticisms of the proposals' content and the infant experiment led Hansen and Banks to issue a joint news release a few days after the Board received the proposal.

The news release warmly applauded the cooperation between the two organizations.

> There has been no disagreement as to the concept of the model school program as originally outlined by Dr. Hansen.... An innovative program of the nature and scope of this one calls for a large amount of detailed planning and coordination in order to insure its success. Therefore, the staffs of the school system and UPO are continuing to work together to develop these details.[70]

The release further stated that the "basic structure remains as it was originally conceived." And Mr. Nickens? "This structure will give the Assistant Superintendent, under the supervision of the Superintendent, the necessary autonomy to introduce new programs, curriculum materials and necessary supportive services."[71] Both organizations desperately wished to avoid a repeat of the earlier WAY-public schools scrap.

Amidst the glow of cooperation and buried on the second page, unreported in the next day's dailies, however, was a warning.

> Any pressure to begin programs which are not thoroughly planned, fully researched and reasonably indicative of success in terms of our goals and responsibilities to the children and citizens of the Model School area and the District of Columbia public school system shall be vigorously resisted.[72]

No one pointed out that such a stipulation destroys the concept of experimentation.

Nickens, Cooke and Hazel drafted and re-drafted proposal after proposal that hot, humid Washington summer. Selecting from the original WAY list of proposals, the subsequent compromise package, suggestions from school officials and UPO staff as well as what could be gleaned from Ford-funded Great Cities projects and other previous national efforts aimed at the disadvantaged (or "culturally deprived" as the document described the students,) a one hundred page document was pulled together.

What made the task tough was that the trio had to work within multiple agency guidelines. To get Ford Foundation funds proposals had to show commitment of institutional leadership toward change, including broad-reaching, long-term plans; such a proposal was unlike one written to secure OEO monies which demanded critical services for the poor, institutional reform and productivity; and this proposal was unlike one written to secure dollars to fight juvenile delinquency. Moreover to tap funds promised by Panel members for an autonomous sub-system, the language of the proposals had to stress innovation, curricular experimentation and independence. This perennial problem of matching proposal language to the goals of different funding agencies seriously complicated the task of the three writers. Paul Cooke, for example, said that what guided his putting together of the first submission to UPO were discussions at Panel seminars. In a letter to Nickens, he said:

> What Dr. (Carl) Marburger (a Panel consultant) said at the meeting of the Panel (June, 1964) was that instruction generally would not be during the regular school day and that it would primarily be remedial in nature. Further, he added that the instruction would be heavily non-curricular in character. All of this is in keeping with the ... Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Title II-A.[73]

Whether or not the consultant said what Cooke remembered is not at issue. The point is that the proposal writers had to juggle conflicting demands for school system change from different agencies while sorting out those demands through their perceptions of what ailed the system and what should be done. More to the point is that regardless of what they came up with criticism was inevitable. The final draft of "Education Proposals" was published in November, 1964, almost three months after school opened. What they came up with fed the critics raw meat.

The school system's initial package for the sub-system stressed it was UPO's educational weapon in the war on poverty. The program would develop an"across-the-board experiment in areas of curriculum development, utilization of teachers and the management of the system itself, with provision for rapid feedback of results and rapid exploitation of new opportunities." [74]

The document further defined its mission by defining possible future components:

> Some components of the model school system are envisaged to be:
>
> 1. A research and development department
>
> 2. Supportive services of all kinds--counselors; psychologists, psychiatrists, etc.
>
> 3. Improved physical facilities
>
> 4. A strong and expanded language arts program
>
> 5. Expanded use of school facilities for education for all ages--extended school day

6. Twelve month teachers

7. Wide use of para-professional people in a variety of ways

8. Optimum pupil-teacher ratio

9. Wide and varied pre-service and in-service training for teachers

10. Schools' responsibility for the social and welfare needs of children--food; clothing; care of the physically and mentally handicapped.

The model system should be free to experiment with:

a. the recruitment of teachers, broadening the base of selection through providing on-the-job training, rather than making the necessary preparation a prerequisite for employment;

b. the utilization of teachers through programs of team teaching, non-graded structures, institution of teacher resource rooms and provision of time to use them;

c. extensive use of part-time assistants and volunteers in tutoring programs, including undergraduate and graduate students, housewives, and professional persons such as artists, musicians, scientists and engineers;

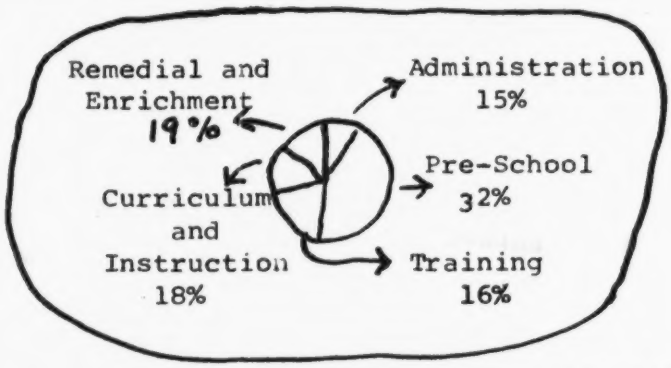
d. use of school facilities in afternoons, evenings, week ends, summers for less formal types of study such as library, art, drama, music, laboratory, and shop;

e. conversion of parts of existing buildings, not presently schools, for use as preschool centers;

f. selection of textbooks, teachers guides, and other instructional materials, including materials selected, or adopted, from materials currently under development in the various course content improvement efforts; and

g. development of new curriculums and materials where no existing materials are found suitable.[75]

For the initial submission, the MSD program for 1964-65 cost over one million dollars, of which over $400,000 had already been funded through the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency. The request of UPO was for over $650,000. The pie chart indicates the proposed allocation of program funds.[76]



For the first year, planning was to be emphasized although pilot programs were to be installed in most of the elementary, junior high schools and Cardozo High School.

In late November, UPO announced the grant of $650,000 to the MSD. Unfortunately, UPO had to write an agreement with the District of Columbia government to regulate how OEO funds were to be transmitted to the District and what controls existed over how it was spent. With these and other delays at UPO and OEO, Nickens couldn't officially launch the model sub-system until March, 1965, or four months before school closed.[77]

By June, the experimental reading programs (Words in Color, Science Research Associates, Initial Teaching Alphabet, etc.) were in planning, developmental or installation stages. Longer school day, remedial reading programs, tutoring by college students and adults, cultural field trips, and some teacher training were at various points of implementation. By summer's end, about 6,000 of the 17,000 students in the MSD were involved in the experiment.[78]

Most of the criticism, initially muted and occasionally surfacing in Post editorials, came from the Advisory Committee. When the Committee received the educational package in early November, almost two months after it had been submitted to the Board and UPO, it was clear that no revisions were seriously intended.

Nickens stated in his letter that he was sending the proposals "for the information of the Advisory Committee."[79] At the November meeting of the Committee, the group decided to hire consultants to evaluate the proposed program.[80] According to the Executive Secretary, "almost without exception, they (eight consultants) expressed concern about the concentration on reading projects and the emphasis on after-school rather than during school programs."[81]

Dr. Kenneth Clark, the one consultant who had enormous prestige and experience in designing urban school reform efforts, expressed restrained enthusiasm for the total program. But, like the other consultants, he questioned the emphasis of MSD on remediation.

> The basic assumptions for the Model School program reflect what I have come to call 'the children are to blame,' and the 'no books in the home' theories for accounting for the educational retardation of these children. This may be an overly severe judgment; however, I looked in general for a program which addressed itself directly to the problem of teaching efficiency and the problem of adequate supervision and general accountability for effective education within the schools, but I looked in vain....
>
> Closely related ... is the fact that many of the programs, particularly the Extended School Program, and the Reading and Tutorial programs are based, I believe, primarily upon an extension of 'more of the same.' Essentially the same teacher, the same school atmosphere and probably the same approaches are to be used in an extended form. The question which bothered me throughout my reading of these programs was a rather simple one; namely, if these teachers could not make these children function on a higher educational level during the regular school day, what would be the particular magic that would make them more successful for the additional one or two hours?[82]

While there were some pluses in the package, the overwhelming consensus of the consultants and leadership of the Council was that the first MSD submission undermined the concepts of experimentation, innovation and substantive changes. By and large, they were right.

The bold rhetoric of the document's first page ("develop new programs and techniques of education which will offer hope to the people trapped by ignorance and poverty," the bold hopes for change "curriculum development, better and more effective utilization of teachers and the management of the system itself")simply had not materialized in this first submission to UPO.[83]

The first stab at a comprehensive program of reform for poor children in a cluster of schools was, indeed, a hodge-podge of efforts shooting off in diverse directions. True, time pressure and conflicting demands help explain inconsistencies. More important, however, is that embedded in the first submission were two critical assumptions about the nature of urban school problems. These assumptions permeated Washington's Great Cities language arts program begun in 1961 and the subsequent compromise package worked out between WAY and school officials in January, 1964. With varying intensity, these assumptions dogged subsequent submissions. Time pressure and conflicting demands do not as easily explain away basic assumptions.

The first assumption, sometimes stated, was that the difficulty lay within the children and their environment.

- "Cultural deprivation, poor background; poor homes or broken homes are responsible for some of the deficiencies which characterize the Model School Division.... Culturally deprived children in our cities do not get enough schooling or the kind of training they need in the conventional school...."

- "Society has a problem of providing for the disadvantaged child what his home cannot or does not do...."

- "The culturally deprived child is handicapped in learning to read and lacks support within the home to help him overcome his deficiencies."

- "The emphasis on giving pre-schoolers a head start, almost 1/3 of the MSD program, assumes that the family cannot adequately prepare young children for school. While some preschool programs were middle-class nursery

> school-oriented, there was a heavy emphasis on shaping up the 4 year old with the necessary survival skills for regular school, i.e. listening to directions, following instructions of teacher, etc."[84]

In short, the problem of schooling rests with the child, his family and environment or some mix of the three. Compensatory programs were built upon this assumption.

The second assumption accepted the existing organization, management and distribution of power in the school system as satisfactory. Never directly stated, it can be inferred since the proposed set of programs did not touch any current structural arrangements. No principal retraining, no teacher staff development, no management effort, no expressed concern or program involvement of citizens or parents in advisory or consultative role--all add up to a basic acceptance of the existing bureaucracy, leadership and governance of the system.

These two assumptions permeated proposals until 1966, although not with the obviousness of the first submission. Leaning heavily upon a compensatory framework for school reform, the first MSD package was a step forward gingerly taken by school officials unused to admitting failure or sharing power; it was, however, to many individuals expecting far more, given abundant rhetoric and promises, a step backward.

Nonetheless, good feelings generated by the birth of the MSD still ran high. By the winter of 1964 and early Spring, 1965, the infant experiment was underway; Norman Nickens had been named permanent Assistant Superintendent of the reform effort. He had helped finesse the Advisory Committee into a position of powerlessness, established a beginning framework for the MSD under the watchful eye of Carl Hansen, learned to negotiate the byzantine corridors of four bureaucracies to gain the first million dollars to operate the sub-system and was now planning a summer in-service teacher training program that promised to curb further criticism.[85] Still, shotgun blasts of criticism continued to focus upon the issue of autonomy. How could MSD really do anything, critics said, unless the umbilical cord to the system were cut?

More Autonomy

"What we have," Herman Branson, Howard University professor and member of the Advisory Committee said, "could not be called a model sub-system by any means."[86] Just two months

after MSD programs were launched and almost a year after Board approval, he described the sub-system as a collection of isolated experiments grafted onto the old school structure. The problem seemed to be a lack of real independence.

As a result of the Advisory Council's sharp criticism of the reform in the local press, the Powell-Pucinski investigation and growing criticism from UPO and OEO, Hansen moved to redefine autonomy.

In late August, 1965, Hansen announced he would recommend to the Board that all nineteen schools in the division would be under the direct control of Nickens.[87] The reform was now to be a decentralized administrative unit reporting directly to the Superintendent. Offices would no longer be in the Franklin Building, but elsewhere. "The primary change will be that the staff will look to Mr. Nickens as the man in charge," the Superintendent said. There will be "greater autonomy to proceed with new ideas."[88]

On September 22, 1965, the Board of Education approved the creation of an "autonomous geographical district."[89] Subsequently an official announcement circulated throughout the system stating:

> The normal maintenance, business and regular supportive functions of the public schools will continue to be supplied the MSD by the proper existing offices of the D.C. schools. All management and administrative functions for ... schools of the MSD which presently exist in the (regular system) will be transferred to the office of the Assistant Superintendent of the Model School Division....[90]

When a Board member asked for a more precise definition of autonomy, the Superintendent replied,

> Autonomy means, for the purpose of this organization, independence of administrative control and supervision, choice of personnel within the rules of the Board and the legislative controls set by Congress, the management of funds for special programs, the assignment of teachers within the division....

> We cannot, nor would I recommend it, and I hope that the Board would not approve it if I did, set up a division of the school system which is not responsive to the rules and regulations of this Board or to the legal requirements set forth by Congress on the operation of the school system.[91]

In effect, the MSD would now have more operational control over teaching personnel, curriculum, instruction and supervision. It would, however, still depend upon the regular system for its budget, assignment of principals and purchasing. The guidelines Nickens gave the Harvard consultants and previous year remained a firm principle; the umbilical cord was scraped but still remained intact.

By October, 1965, the MSD had more independence than when it was approved; what it had was satisfactory to the Superintendent since he still exercised control through the budget office, but was still insufficient to suit the Advisory Committee. Norman Nickens who firmly believed that nothing meaningful could be done unless "Hansen is fully behind us," felt that he now had "all the autonomy" he needed.[92] He had already been convinced by members of the Advisory Committee and UPO to design a new administrative organizational structure for the sub-system to accomodate the increase in autonomy. The design was submitted to UPO in September, 1965 along with other program proposals for 1965-1966. But UPO was now having misgivings about the Model School Division as the education component of a community organization.

UNITED PLANNING ORGANIZATION AND MODEL SCHOOL DIVISION, 1964-1967

UPO began as a Ford Foundation invention using President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency funds and ended up coordinating Washington's war on poverty. Beginning in August, 1963 with a handful of employees, a year and a half later UPO had 16 million dollars in federal grants and over 500 employees.[93] Not an unusual metamorphis for the early and mid-60's in big city anti-poverty politics, but one that had significant implications for the D.C. schools.

Around James Banks, Executive Director of UPO swirled the forces that created and shaped a federally-subsidized new institution committed to action in behalf of the poor. Like Nickens, Banks was a native Washingtonian.[94] After graduation

from Howard University, Banks climbed slowly upward through the federal and District bureaucracies as a professional civil servant. Gaining most of his experience in public housing and slum clearance agencies, Banks captured respect in both the black and white professional community. Black administrators were few, given the rigid color line that separated low-level from upper-level government positions. Quiet and calm, Banks counted upon persuasion and negotiation to achieve his goals. To white professional reformers eager to underwrite change in Washington, D.C., James Banks was an ideal choice for leadership.

The President's Committee's investment in Washington was WAY, basically a planning venture of one year's duration. Close ties between the PCJD and Ford had produced follow-up grants from one agency or the other, depending on who was there first. The District was no exception, except for the fuss WAY was kicking up over the schools.

Ford was interested in D.C. but not in confrontation. In August, 1963, six months after WAY began operation, a substantial planning grant for the creation of a "grey areas" proposal was made to UPO, then only a paper umbrella organization established to plan for public and private efforts to help the poor. Banks, an urban renewal official, was tapped to write the proposal. While he traveled to observe Ford-funded projects in other cities and began pulling together a proposal, Goldberg hammered at Hansen and other city agencies. Goldberg's style, constant headlines, open conflict over the schools soured WAY in the minds of many reformers and politicians.

By the Spring of 1964, WAY's job of planning an action program was completed. A two volume, five pound report appeared in March. Anti-poverty legislation was wending its way through the federal process. Ford and PCJD both saw UPO as the appropriate instrument to achieve their goal of institutional change to abolish poverty. But who was going to run it? Goldberg or Banks? Both wanted the job; whoever got it would stamp his style and presumably steer a course different from the other. After a great deal of political jockeying, Banks got the job. Goldberg explains the decision in this manner.

> Jim Banks was a smooth operator, black, good connections. He could move around the Washington establishment without being too conspicuous. He was very clearly connected with Ford; he was part of their black stable and that was an important factor since Ford money was needed to get the programs off and running. Ford was

> very pushy about Banks.... Anyway, my power base was linked to Kennedy and the JD Committee. With the assassination the JD Committee's power was gone. I was literally in a boat with no oars.[95]

Banks recalls it this way.

> After a meeting in Virginia in December of 1963 ... for all Ford grants in grey areas, Charles Horsky and Cliff Alexander (then White House Special Assistant for District Affairs) asked me to step aside for Goldberg. Benetta(Washington) even drove Paul Yvilsaker (Ford's Public Affairs director) to D.C. in their chauffeured limosine and argued for Jack Goldberg. In fact, Horsky said to me that if I didn't resign, I wouldn't get any federal funds. At a later point, Horsky asked me to take on Goldberg as a deputy director with the independence to do as he wished. Of course, neither of us could accept that....
>
> (QUESTION: What got you the job then?) Ford wanted me and a black committee ... put on a great deal of pressure.[96]

Ford money, PCJD grants and, by late summer, promises of OEO funds, poured into D.C. Staff from WAY and PCJD joined UPO. By November, 1964, over $10 million over a three year period had been committed to UPO.[97]

As Executive Director, Banks had great leverage. The thirty member predominately white Board of Trustees chaired by a corporation executive seldom countermanded Banks. Outside of the constraints of grant regulations and local and federal politics, Banks had a free hand. Thus, how Banks perceived the problem of poverty, the mission of UPO and the strategies he would use had special importance. A sampling of his views:

- "The whole culture of opportunity must be revived in poor areas so that the children and grandchildren of today's poor will not face the same fate."

- "Our goals and objectives are much more complex (than a civil rights organization.) We have to help poor people find for themselves the capacity to meet the everyday problems they deal with. It's a learning process and it's part and parcel of community organization. It also has a lot more value than participating in demonstrations. Civil Rights groups have their role; we have ours."

- "We must get a momentum started of movement up the ladder.... The poor simply must be helped to learn, to think and act for themselves."

- "We must recognize that as poor people become newly-acquainted with authority they are going to make mistakes. That's part of growing up. I am not saying that the poor can resolve the problems of poverty. Our interest in getting them to participate is not that they know better than anybody else what's good for them. But if they are not involved they will never be able to continually protect themselves as one must do in this society for survival...."[98]

Four priority areas were carved out; education, employment, legal services and housing. The means to achieve opportunity for the poor was community organization. Neighborhood Development Centers were established with residents hired to organize neighbors to deal with issues that concerned them and provide essential social services. Not only was such community organization difficult to mount but the resistance it generated among those public officials criticized by the organized poor resonated loudly throughout the District.

Banks tried mightily to avoid open confrontation. OEO's community action mission, however, was imbued with the kind of activism and citizen advocacy that often turned out to be confrontation tactics at the local level. Unsurprisingly, he was often criticized for his lack of militance and vigor, his inability to stand strong on issues affecting the poor. When he was criticized, Banks said:

> So many people think the problem is solved if they speak out. This is a ticklish business. You can be militant and show people how strongly you feel and your programs are out of business. Or you can be smart and keep the program going and get things done.[99]

Banks viewed confrontation differently than sidewalk activists or professional reformers in his own agency.

> So many people interpret confrontation as a kind of bitter conflict, bound to end in disaster.... I interpret it this way. Say you work with a person and he continuously treats you badly. He always leaves you out of the conversation, he gives you the worst assignments and the worst equipment. The longer you say nothing about it he will assume you aren't dissatisfied.
>
> But if you tell him you don't like it, he may be upset, but he will begin to respect you more and be mindful of what you're thinking. There will be more respect on both sides of the fence.[100]

That suited the Superintendent of schools just fine. After abrasive Jack Goldberg, calm, pipe-smoking, conservatively-dressed James Banks was most welcome. "My strategy," Banks once said, "was to see if I can get him (Hansen) to agree to do things that he didn't want to do. He had been through one ordeal with Jack and he would welcome my approach."[101]

Banks and Hansen had, according to the UPO executive, "friendly relations--we would go to the Cosmos Club (a prestigious Washington private club) and be very charming...."[102] Apparently, communication between agencies was more open than with WAY.

To further encourage closeness, Banks hired as his top educational adviser, Dr. Irene Hypps, recently retired from the school system. Dr. Hypps believed that UPO "should be very innovative and firmly critical of the school system in a constructive manner." She felt that "UPO should begin innovative educational efforts in the community rather than attack the public schools."[103]

Dr. Hansen wrote a warm recommendation for his former associate. Cementing closeness further, Banks and Nickens were, of course, old friends.

Such an approach yielded harmonious relations between the two agencies. A bumper crop of press releases, mutual praise and pats on the back were harvested the first year of the experiment (June, 1964-June, 1965). But at a cost.

Increasing skepticism of Banks' leadership style and substance from within UPO top staff, and growing criticism outside the agency over the direction and operation of the sub-system drove Banks to reassess his approach.

Pressure from within came from staff members who felt UPO should aggressively unite with the civil rights movement (Selma, Alabama was making daily headlines), forcefully use federal funds either as a carrot or a stick to jolt traditional institutions into serving the poor better. Letting poor people have more power to run the Neighborhood Development Centers rather than have downtown UPO officials make the key decisions; more representatives of the poor put on the Board of Trustees; more aggressive advocacy in behalf of the poor on critical issues as housing, employment and education--these were their demands upon Banks.

In education, for example, UPO critics felt that MSD achieved little and moved at a turtle's pace toward reform. "I had an increasing cynicism," one UPO education specialist said, "based on the evidence that the only way for change was from citizens. The system could not preside over its own change. We needed an informed, brave citizenry."[104] Major differences like these between key staff and Banks resulted in five top executives leaving the agency in October, 1965.

After a year's work with MSD, Banks relectantly arrived at the conclusion that cordial relations with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of the Model were superficial and yielded precious little in tangible reform. The heat Banks was getting from OEO and inside his own organization was intense enough for him to shift positions.

UPO top staff and members of the Advisory Committee had been meeting privately during the Spring and Summer of 1965 to plan for the summer teacher-training institute and their up-coming second MSD submission to UPO. Pressed by close aides to disentangle himself from a policy of cooperation with MSD in order to lean on the schools, Banks and his deputies began meeting privately with the Advisory

Committee in the Summer and Fall of 1965. From the journal of the Advisory Committee's Executive Secretary, a participant in all of these meetings, a few excerpts:

> 7/13/65 Meeting in Judge's (Bazelon) chambers.... Banks had asked a meeting to be set up. Came to ask Judge that UPO and Advisory Committee work out a strategy for change, that is organizations outside the school system. Judge ribbed Banks a good deal about this--that's what the Committee wanted last year (Fall, 1964). Jim agreed but thought it would have been necessary to get to know the system as "we" now do before we could act.
>
> Now we know the concept of MSD needs re-definition; work out a strategy to deal with the school system. Bazelon said a confrontation was necessary for example over the administrative structure--didn't matter whether Adv. Ctte. did it or not.... (original emphasis)
>
> 7/19/65 Met that evening at Bazelon's.... Judge wondered if the Board of Education would go along with autonomy for the MSD.... Banks ... was very 'strong' and said he'd fight Hansen....[105]

While Banks never took on Hansen publicly, this limited, behind the scenes pressure did produce results of sorts in Hansen's redefining MSD autonomy the following month. Moreover, UPO also held up the MSD submission to OEO because Nickens had submitted proposals that left unclear the MSD administration and role of the Advisory Committee and other items. A number of meetings, a number of re-writes, a new submission and UPO reluctantly transmitted it to OEO. Final approval and release of funds did not occur until January, 1966 or four months before school would end--a slight improvement over the previous year, but still crippling for program operation.

With the support of the Advisory Committee, and amidst continued bickering internally at UPO and critical press editorials over UPO's delay in submitting MSD proposals to OEO, Banks' deputy, Gary Bellow, set in motion in late 1965 and early 1966 an internal reassessment of UPO's role with the schools.[106]

The UPO Education Task Force had as consultants Nickens, Saliterman and Joseph Carroll, Assistant Superintendent of Budget and Research and Legislation. Christopher Jencks whose views carried great weight at UPO was with the Institute of Policy Studies and the only paid consultant. After two months of discussions, a position paper was hammered out that proved to be the rationale for subsequent changes between UPO and MSD.

"The first responsibility of UPO," the final draft said, "should be to help organize poor people in the Greater Washington area so that they can act collectively to achieve economic self-sufficiency and full participation in the community."[107] All UPO efforts should be evaluated against this criterion.

On the MSD, the Task Force concluded that with two exceptions "the programs conducted by the Model School Division do not contribute to community organization."[108] Moreover, virtually all the programs in the Model do not meet UPO criteria for innovation ("promise material improvement in the condition of the poor if accepted by established institutions,") and could be easily funded under Title I of ESEA.[109]

The Task Force bluntly concluded:

> The Model School Division has not and will not be given sufficient autonomy to make 'outside' funding from UPO a valuable asset to it. The Task Force therefore believes that the Board of Education should seek ESEA support for those Model School Division programs which it decided to continue....[110]

Official relations between MSD and UPO, which had deteriorated since the previous Fall, decayed further as rumors of these conclusions spread throughout the school administration. OEO cuts in UPO's budget which the local agency translated into cuts in MSD programs did not help matters either. Nor did the fact that UPO staffers Diane Sternberg, Marcia Derfner, and Don Campbell virtually re-wrote the 1966-1967 MSD submission to OEO for funding.[111]

Nickens pressed Hansen for ESEA Title I funds to replace UPO support. And he was successful. For all MSD programs that operated in 1965-1966, the second year of the experiment, 56% of the funding was Title I. The following year saw the ESEA share climb to 63%; in 1967-1968, the share went to 70%. At this point,

UPO's share was only the pre-school program.[112]

From his involvement with the Advisory Committee and UPO, both formal and informal, Nickens probably knew what was about to happen. In November, 1966, he wrote to the Superintendent:

> I seem to be writing you a great many letters lately, but I guess I miss being able to walk across the office and discuss problems with you as they come up (MSD offices were now two blocks away).... It could be my guess that UPO would cut the education component of its community action program and support the Neighborhood Development Centers with the savings. I would further surmise that our next year's funding would be limited to pre-school type programs....[113]

That is exactly what happened five months later. Except for the pre-schools, the UPO Board of Trustees cut off all MSD funding.

Nickens, of course, knew about the policy shift at UPO. Knowing which way the wind was blowing, the Assistant Superintendent moved slowly but steadily in shifting MSD programs over to ESEA and Impact Aid budgets--against the stiff resistance of the Director of the Budget, Joseph Carroll. While many people including Banks were shocked at UPO's Board action, it came as no surprise to Nickens. He sensed it was coming; the exact day was unknown. What exactly happened inside UPO?

In early 1967, a number of staffers thoroughly disillusioned with MSD were pushing for UPO funds to be diverted to other sorts of educational activities located in the community. The UPO Education Task Force report provided the rationale and justification for such a move. At that time, Education Specialist Diane Sternberg wrote the Deputy Director about a proposal for Education Action Teams located in the Neighborhood Development Centers. These Teams "will build and develop within each of the poverty areas an articulate community education organization directed toward producing positive institutional changes in the school system...."[114] The money needed to underwrite these Teams would come from the MSD budget.

Sternberg presented this approach to the Metropolitan Citizens Advisory Council (MCAC), a lay group that advised UPO on policy issues. Her position on MSD and the Team proposal was not UPO policy then nor was it Banks' position. Banks had already recommended to OEO continued MSD funding for 1967-1968. The MCAC voted to sever MSD funding. "We want," their memo to the Board of Trustees said, "to see results with the money we allocate to programs which are supposed to change the life of the poor." They wanted "a direct say in how the money will be spent." These were their reasons for cutting off MSD funds. What should be done with the $242,000?

> This money should be spent on education action programs on a neighborhood level, designed to inform people about their schools and equip them ... with necessary skills to join together with their neighbors to press for the changes and reforms that are required.[115]

On April 14, 1967 against Banks' advice, the Board of Trustees voted 10 to 8 to drop the MSD from its program. Although his decision to leave the agency had been made prior to this reversal, Banks resigned a week later to take a position with the U.S. Housing and Urban Development agency.

Interviewed after he announced his departure, Banks felt UPO had some impact on the District schools "but not what we hoped for." [116] Five years later, Banks could only "regret that MSD wasn't as successful as it could have been.... If I had the whole thing to do over again, I would not go through the school system.... I don't think you can go into an institution and change it.[117]

Ironically, precisely at the point that UPO divorced itself from MSD, Hansen who was reeling from a barrage of criticism and a hostile Board of Education was no longer able to monitor his assistant. As UPO passed from the scene and as Hansen resigned the Superintendency, MSD was formally institutionalized.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The year 1967 was an especially critical one for the Washington public schools. Social forces fermenting for decades in shifting population and the end of <u>de jure</u> segregation bubbled to the surface finally; expectations unleashed by the rhetoric of

reform were like past due creditors clamoring for payment. Black dissatisfaction with white recalcitrance expressed nationally in black power slogans surfaced in D.C. and pelted Hansen and his white successor with pent-up anger.

While there had always been some criticism of the Track and Amidon plans, growing disillusionment with Hansen was fed by WAY, UPO, the Advisory Committee, and the Post, which became increasingly hostile to Hansen.[118] In 1965, the Board voted 5-3 to retain the Track plan. Had Hansen stuck his finger into the wind, he would have felt it blowing strongly against him.

Sensing trouble and wishing to buy more time to divert criticism, Hansen recommended in early 1965 a major study of the school system. Dr. A. Harry Passow, Teachers College, Columbia University contracted to do a $250,000 comprehensive examination of the system. At about the same time, Julius Hobson, a longtime local gadfly and civil rights advocate, who had called for Hansen's resignation earlier in the year, filed suit in federal court claiming the Superintendent and the Board discriminated against poor, black children. For weeks during the Summer of 1966, D.C. school officials, including Hansen, testified. They revealed inequities and conditions that shocked usually unflappable Washingtonians. It was most painful for Hansen.

In August, 1966, for the first time, a Hansen recommendation to the Board was rejected. Moreover, he was instructed by the Board to innovate in ungraded and team-teaching modes rather than institute his recommended fifth track. All of this paled in comparison to what happened in the first six months of 1967.

In early 1967, Hansen's three-year contract was up for renewal. Three years earlier, the vote was 7-1 and one abstention; now after month-long public hearings on whether the Superintendent should be retained, the Board--its membership opposed to tracking--in a bitterly fought executive session voted 5-4 to keep the Superintendent. In April, the Teachers Union won an election to represent all teachers in contract negotiations. A longtime supporter of the NEA, Hansen found this unpleasant. The next month found Hobson leading the first school boycott of the D.C. schools. While only 500 people (mostly adults) showed up at the Washington Monument to attend Freedom Schools, the local press gave it front page space. Finally, in mid-June a preliminary report of the year-long Passow report was released; it called for a number of dramatic, basic changes in the system.

The next day, Federal Judge Skelly Wright delivered the Hobson v. Hansen decision. The D.C. schools were ordered to abolish the Track Plan, bus black children from over-crowded Anacostia schools into under-capacity white schools, west of Rock Creek Park, integrate faculties, and equalize spending between schools in affluent and impoverished areas of the city.[119] Precisely at this time, with Hansen reeling from attacks, the Board delegated the most authority and funds it had ever granted to the MSD. Why with Hansen's resignation a fortnight away, did the Board move with such dispatch?

Nickens' strategy to get the experiment institutionalized had paid off. His approach had always been to move no faster or further than the Superintendent or Board would allow. Sensing that Hansen's crumbling authority might also bring down the MSD or simply leave it stranded, Nickens (through a friendly Board member) got the Board in April to request him to do a review of the MSD and report back two months later. Nickens knew that Board approval of MSD recommendations would stabilize federal funding and keep the sub-system afloat regardless of what happened to Hansen.

For the next two months, MSD committees held Open Houses for the Cardozo community and wrote a series of impressive documents both for public and Board consumption.[120]

Amidst repercussions of the Passow Report, the Hobson v. Hansen decision and rumor of Hansen's imminent departure, the Board needed desperately something to hang on to.[121] Nickens' report to the Board in late June gave them precisely that. It was masterful in timing.

On June 26, Nickens summarizing the written report sketched out for the Board the mission of the MSD, its past problems and what he hoped could happen.

The mission, he said, "is to operate a semi-autonomous sub-system within the regular school system... (and) to help children learn by helping them to want to learn...."[122] Specifically, the MSD aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. to improve the quality of instruction

2. to extend educational services

3. to develop interaction and involvement of the community within the schools

4. to improve administration[123]

Past problems in achieving these have been enormous, according to Nickens. Quietly and firmly, he reminded the Board of what the experimental sub-system faced. First, he said, the children came from poor homes. He sketched out the grim statistics of poverty in the Cardozo area. Second, overcrowded and antiquated school facilities. Third, no free time to release teachers for training. Fourth, there have been "administrative bottlenecks." Fifth, being forced to work within multiple bureaucracies have forced the MSD "to dance among ... them and try to get our programs into them." Sixth, funding dates crippled programming, Nickens pointed out that in the first year of operation UPO funds were available for only three months of the school year; similarly for the next year, UPO funds materialized in January, 1966 to finance four months of programs. It was only since September, 1966, or almost two years after the MSD began, that the sub-system has had a full year of funding approved before school opened.[124]

After listing other problems, Nickens concluded by stressing that federal funds on a per pupil basis over the regularly budgeted amount have been quite small.

1964-1965	$36.70
1965-1966	$31.70
1966-1967	$68.70

The Assistant Superintendent underscored the slimness of the effort thus far. "Next year," Nickens added, "we are asking for approximately $130 per pupil in federal funds. We think this will begin to meet the needs of our program and allow follow through with our successes."[125]

After cataloguing these problems and listing MSD accomplishments, Nickens requested Board approval for four recommendations.

- $100,000 to use for planning
- authority to shift special supervisory and teaching personnel programs throughout the MSD even though they are not used elsewhere in the system
- authority to directly purchase experimental materials[126]

The Assistant Superintendent concluded his hour-long presentation by saying

> We feel the ... Board ... will help us work through and develop the kind of unit here which can radiate its findings which can radiate the new programs and develop them throughout the system so that we end up with what is relatively an inexpensive area for research and demonstration and experimentation within a given school system.[127]

One afternoon newspaper described the Board's unanimous approval as "Green Light Is Won By Model Division."[128]

Board approval gave the MSD the most authority and autonomy it had in three years. Ironically, it occurred just a few weeks before the Board refused Hansen's request to appeal the recent court decision. The Superintendent, reluctant father of the sub-system resigned. Within the next month, Nickens was assisting Acting Superintendent, Benjamin Henley, sketch out how MSD experience should be used to implement Judge Skelly Wright's decision.

Within the next year, Norman Nickens, at the Board's behest, initiated a major study of the MSD in an effort to reorganize its operations, consolidate gains and specify the details of what MSD would look like were it to become a decentralized region, as the Passow study had recommended. This report was submitted to the Board in the summer of 1968 and accepted. Within the next few months, MSD would have its own personnel, business, supervisory, administrative and budgeting apparatus; it would receive a "fair share" of the system's regular operating funds and would be free to use those and federal dollars in whatever manner it chose.

By the end of 1968, another Nickens' venture, the Innovative Team, would be well on its way to national prominence.[129] A novel staff development effort aimed primarily at the elementary schools in the Division, the Innovative Team garnered its reputation for its talented and speedy school response to the Washington riots following the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King.

When President Lyndon B. Johnson designated Washington for a major urban educational demonstration and asked Congress for $10,000,000 to underwrite the effort, the Board chose the Anacostia area and new Superintendent William Manning turned to Nickens to run it. Within weeks, Nickens was elevated to the number three spot in the school system, Deputy Superintendent of Instruction.

After five years, the Model School Division had now become an integral semi-autonomous part of the system. Its head had gone on to become a highly-regarded, top-level administrator within the system. Its critics--the Advisory Committee and UPO--had departed from the school scene. In effect, a micro-system had been created that mirrored the larger system. If the goal of the MSD was institutionalization of program and leadership, it was most successful; but no such goal was ever stated; the goals of this reform would have to be measured against other criteria, ever mindful that stated goals change, and often unstated goals become the real ones.

Such an extended description of the origin and development of the MSD sets the stage for an analysis of why the reform took the course it did.

AMOUNT OF FUNDS INVESTED IN MODEL SCHOOL DIVISION, BY SOURCE

YEAR	SOURCE*	AMOUNT	PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE**
1964-1965	UPO	$565,178***	$26
1965-1966	UPO ESEA	$1,823,121****	$55.6
1966-1967	ESEA UPO IA	$1,402,744	$61.4
1967-1968	ESEA IA	$1,428,288	$86.3
	Total	$5,219,331	Average expenditure: $57.3

SOURCE: "Model School Division: Summary of Per Pupil Expenditures for Elementary and Secondary School Pupils by School Year," D.C. Public Schools Finance Office, (no date).

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*United Planning Organization (UPO), Title I of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and Impact Aid (AI)

**For this period there were almost 17,000 students in the MSD

***This grant was available in March, 1965 three months before the end of the school year; some funds were not spent.

****These funds were not available until January, 1966; half of the school year was already over.

Chapter 2

WHY DID THE MSD DEVELOP THE WAY IT DID?

> The final outcome (of a project) cannot simply be related to the initial aim and method, since these have undergone continual revision. The whole process--the false starts, frustrations, adaptations, the successive recasting of intentions, the detours and conflicts--needs to be comprehended. Only then can we understand what has been achieved, and learn from the experience.[1]

Explaining why a reform moved the way it did invariably includes a list of factors such as leadership, funding, accident, bureaucracy, prevailing climate of change, etc. According to a writer's interpretation each is usually assigned differing weight. While a degree of objectivity can be injected into such analysis, when the verbiage is stripped away such explanations are basically no more than the writer's hunch, given his reading of the evidence, on what the key variables are. This writer is no different from his colleagues.

While leadership, money, chance, and other variables influenced the direction of the MSD as seen in the last chapter, three interrelated factors seemed to play a major, if not decisive part in determining where MSD went. First, various participants perceived reform differently; second, since policy-making power was distributed unevenly among these participants, each one's perceptions were or were not converted into policy depending upon how much power each had; third, the degree of precision reformers outside the system conceptualized the goals, strategies and consequences of school change. The history of the MSD bears witness to the importance of reform perceptions, conceptualizations and their correlation to policy-making power.

To simplify the discussion, reform can be divided into three parts: goals, analysis of problems and strategies. In the origin and growth of the MSD, reform participants were:

1. Washington Action for Youth (WAY)

2. United Planning Organization (UPO)

3. Panel on Educational Research and Development (PERD)

4. Superintendent, Board and central administration of the D.C. Public Schools

To gain an overall picture of the complexity of the interaction between participants' perceptions of reform and their varying degrees of policy-making power, how each participant viewed reform will be dealt with initially. Following that, an estimate will be made of how much power to make or influence policy each participant possessed at particular times in the life of MSD. Finally, an explanation, with supporting evidence, of why MSD developed as it did will be provided.

Perceptions of Reform Participants

Both WAY and UPO derived their goals and strategies from the professional reform ideology that grew within, initially, the Ford Foundation and the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency (PCJD) and, later, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).[2] Thus, to revitalize the city so that the symptoms of decay could be dealt with imaginatively, Ford executives aimed to create a process of institutional change within rigid urban systems. To achieve this goal, Ford stressed the development of community leadership and a consensus for change.

The PCJD--under the umbrella of delinquency prevention--saw the problem of the city similarly except the staff felt that an exact analysis of the problems and an intellectually coherent design based upon that analysis were often missing from urban plans for change. The President's Committee's strategy, then, was the development of rational plans for reform.

Both agencies, however, were commited to democratic participation; in Ford's words "to plan with people, not for people" while the PCJD demanded evidence that individuals or organizations have "involvement in the project's planning process."[3] And OEO, borrowing ideas and staff from both Ford and PCJD, were handed a congressionally-mandated goal to alleviate poverty and a similarly mandated strategy: community action.

For Washington, these goals, analyses and strategies meant that WAY, funded by PCJD, developed a two-volume "action" plan to change employment, housing, welfare, education and other urban institutions. These "planners turned activists" confronted school officials first, and departed first.[4]

After WAY's demise, UPO also funded by PCJD and Ford, embraced the "action" plan. Not only did UPO fall heir to WAY's plan, it accepted many of the basic assumptions of what ailed D.C.

and what should be done. When OEO funds flowed into UPO coffers, the community action strategy was grafted onto a previous commitment to planning (the "P" in UPO) and the search for an institutional consensus for change.

Here, then, were two government-sponsored agencies commited to urban reform; intellectual heirs to Ford and PCJD perceptions of reform, they were charged to mobilize the community to act in its behalf. What about their perceptions of the schools?

Both agencies assumed that the cycle of poverty could be broken by improved schooling. And to achieve that, both felt the school system would have to undergo basic changes in its management, operation and direction. Plans were needed. So was the commitment for change from the system's leadership needed.

How to initiate changes in the system, sustain them and make them meaningful were tactical questions that the directors of WAY and UPO answered differently. Nonetheless, their basic perceptions about the inadequacies of the school system and the necessary changes that had to be made were more alike than not.

The Panel on Education and Research Development, however, did not share the broad vision of urban institutional reform; they were interested in only school reform. They saw the cause of the problems of low achievement, high drop-out rates and alienated deprived youth in the inefficient, ineffective, unimaginative and narrowly conceived operation of the schools. Were this spiral of failure reversed, school problems of low-income youth would be solved. Their goal for school reform was experimentation in all areas of school operation and management, but with a strong bias toward curriculum development. Their strategy to implement experiments on a significant scale was a model sub-system.

To Carl Hansen, many Board members and professional staff, the chief problem of the school system was perceived as a lack of money. If dollars were made available then the teachers, services and programs would be able to deal with the enormous problems that poverty lays on children. While there were inefficiencies and ineffective teachers and administrators the problem was inadequate resources. Were they made available, reforms inside the system could be easily undertaken--under the guidance of school officials--and pursued successfully. Analyzing the problem this way, the goal of the Superintendent was simply to get more dollars flowing into the schools. Strategy? By any means possible.

To summarize, WAY-UPO saw the schools as one of many institutions to be changed if the city were ever to respond to the needs of black poor people. Because schooling was perceived as critical in cracking the poverty cycle and because it was seen as ineffective, basic changes within the schools were essential as a first step. The school, in effect, was seen as a potential agent of change. PERD, interested solely in school reform as opposed to broad social reform perceived educational problems to be located in the schools, not the children. Schools must change if there was to be children-change. The system, once it set up an autonomous division, could continually renew itself. The school managers, on the other hand, saw the problems of underachievement and ineffectiveness as outside their control, i.e. insufficient funds and impoverished environment.

Clearly, the perceptions of what the problems were and what should be done conflicted.

Degrees of Policy-Making Power

That these four critical participants in the reform of the D.C. schools possessed varying amounts of power to institute change is clear. What was self-evident, however, was that only the Superintendent had sufficient power to convert his perceptions of the problems and his goals of reform into Board of Education policy. None of the other reform agencies could muster the necessary influence or power to turn their perceptions into policy. All they could do was nudge the Superintendent in a direction he had to or wished to go. Or they could modify slightly his position. That's all.[5]

WAY's power, wedded to the Kennedy administration, disappeared with the death of the President. Whether Goldberg backed by the Attorney General and White House could have dumped Hansen, as the former Director claimed, remains an intriguing historical question. But the essential point is that WAY's frontal assault upon Hansen harvested the system a half-million dollars in programs that the Superintendent controlled on his terms. Had there been no WAY would Hansen have created a Cardozo area and a bevy of projects? Probably not. Yet, Hansen won the power struggle and maintained control of money and programs on his terms. "Hansen," a close aid observed, "never bought into anything he couldn't win 9-0 on."[6]

Because UPO's James Banks chose to pursue an initial strategy of conciliation and cooperation with the system, UPO's political clout, i.e. withholding of federal funds, was reduced to siphoning funds into the MSD. And when MSD funds were cut off in 1967, over Banks' veto, it was then too late to influence the direction of the experiment since the Division was already receiving almost three-quarters of its support from other federal sources.

Although enormous resources were promised, PERD did not itself have a penny. All it had was an idea. The Panel's influence stemmed from the persuasive Joseph Turner, Staff Assistant to the Panel, being at the right place, at the right time. Influence also came from the Panel's substantial links with the burgeoning math and science curriculum reform movement.[7] The key fact, however, was that in late '63 and early '64, Hansen was under attack from Goldberg and other critics. Demands from UPO for a school commitment to a war on poverty and community action were being made. The Superintendent desperately needed a device that would satisfy critics as to his reform intentions. The model sub-system concept with its prestigious Panel members was perfect to his needs. Lacking power, all Turner and other Panel members could do was to invest their dreams in controlling appointments to the Advisory Committee (which they did), urge their influential friends in the local press to push for the concept, and other means of informal influence. All to no avail. The story of Nickens and Hansen outflanking the Advisory Committee was detailed in the last chapter. The concept of the model sub-system underwent several changes as it was used to meet the needs of the professionals rather than the hopes of the Panel. Panel members could only shake their heads in dismay.

Between 1963-1966, the Superintendent dominated the policy-making process. The central administration and the Board complied with his wishes. What Carl Hansen wanted from the Board, he got; what he didn't want, the Board seldom saw on the agenda.[8] He and his staff determined what issues were to be brought before the Board; what alternatives were to be presented and the research to support each alternative. He made sure the budget reflected his priorities. The Superintendent's commitment to Tracking, the Amidon Plan and his perceptions of what poverty does to children set limits to what shape reform would take under his aegis.

While Hansen candidly admitted that his initial attraction to the sub-system was the lure of badly-needed cash, he grew increasingly cold to the concept and its ramifications. When, he

wrote, "I asked the Board of Education to accept a grant of $6,131.99 from ... the United Planning Organization ... I should have known that any agency that would propose a grant short of one cent to round out the dollar would be as difficult as Santa Claus to deal with."[9] Such government-subsidized changes, he felt, could be dangerous to the existing school structure, a structure that Hansen found sound. One Board member summed up the Superintendent's ambivalent stand.

> I could never see Hansen as trying to kill it. (MSD) People said so but I didn't think so. I felt that with all the feeling of those prestigious people that to let it go down the drain would not enhance his stature. On the other hand, he didn't bend over backwards to support it. It was shaking his apple cart.[10]

The Superintendent needed to keep close watch on its operation, yet not too close to be accused of strangling reform. Hansen maintained control through policy-making in three areas: delegation of authority, choice of personnel and funding decisions.

Delegation of Authority: Autonomy of MSD and the Advisory Committee

WAY, UPO, PERD and the Advisory Committee wanted complete independence (only restraint was that the Assistant Superintendent would report to Hansen) for the sub-system. Hansen and Nickens interpreted autonomy differently. The 1964 initial guidelines for the sub-system clearly stated the limits on independence. After extensive external pressure, Hansen bent, extending slightly more authority but still maintaining budgetary and supervisory control. Not until early 1967 when Hansen was under heavy attack and struggling for survival, did MSD get the sort of authority its early well-wishers had hoped for.

While the Advisory Committee wanted governing power, or at least a sharing of authority with the Board of Education, the question of what authority the Committee would have was again answered by Hansen. Citing legal requirements established by Congress that made the Board solely responsible for operation of the system, he also used the device of a Harvard consultants' report to frame

an advisory role for the Committee; he exploited UPO's early conciliatory approach to avoid any sharing of power with the Committee. He chose not to support independent funding for the group and, wherever possible kept the committee uninformed. So when the Advisory Committee would send recommendations to the Board, one member recalled the "Board would say the hell with it."[11] In disgust, the Committee gave up.

Choice of Personnel

In every instance where a key position was to be filled, Hansen's man was selected. In April, 1964, Dr. Paul Cooke was appointed over Jack Goldberg's candidate, Benetta Washington as the first Director of the Inner City Target Area Project. After this was shelved, Norman Nickens, Hansen's Executive Assistant, was tapped for the acting head of the sub-system experiment in the Summer of 1964. When the formal announcement requesting applications for Assistant Superintendent of the Model School Division was circulated a few months later, to no one's surprise, Norman Nickens was again selected.

Funding Decision

Twice during the early years of the MSD, federal funds were available with few strings attached. School officials had great flexibility in allocating these federal dollars. One would assume that if the MSD had the real priority that official rhetoric indicated more than a token sum would have been allocated for the experiment. But Hansen's priorities were elsewhere. In December, 1964, $2.5 million in Impact Aid funds became available; not until two years later was even a fraction of these funds spent on MSD. In November, 1965, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act aimed specifically at poor children gave the District $6.3 million. Of that amount $500,000 or less than ten percent went into the Cardozo sub-system although it had over twenty percent of all poor children in Washington.[12]

Finally, certain kinds of budgetary rearrangements in delegating authority and administratively reorganizing could have been made without spending one penny had Hansen been intent upon initiating basic reforms. No such funding decisions, of course, were made.

The Superintendent's control of policy-making in the three above areas guaranteed that the MSD would move no faster or further than he wished it to.

When his control began to fragment under the barrage of criticism (and personal abuse) in mid-1966 and completely splinter by early 1967, pieces of that power fell into the lap of the Board and some were quietly pocketed by Nickens. These pieces coalesced briefly in June, 1967 when more autonomy and funding were granted to MSD.

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There is little doubt that Carl Hansen mistrusted the model sub-system reform from its inception. He monitored closely its development and reluctantly assented to its growth. By no means, could one read the evidence and conclude that the Superintendent warmly embraced the reform measures, constructively nourished its development and initiated supportive efforts. Nor could one conclude the opposite as one participant did.

> School authorities undertaking the establishment of an autonomous experimental sub-system was as if someone had agreed to open a theatre, but knew nothing of acting of directing, was not an impresario, and did not like theatrical folk anyway.[13]

Nickens who admired Hansen's leadership respected his power.[14] Nickens could only manuever within the narrow margin Hansen allowed him, nudging gently at the limits placed upon his freedom. A more aggressive administrator might have pushed and prodded more, but probably would have sought employment elsewhere early in the experiment's history. Specifically, Nickens could never have survived had he abolished the Track Plan and Amidon in the MSD. He could, and did, however, initiate non-graded and team-teaching programs as well as numerous curricular changes. But only to a limit. The Assistant Superintendent described himself as "a man astride a chasm with the chasm getting wider all the time."[15]

The gradual toning down of reform rhetoric, the gradual shifting of aims from experimentation to providing services mirror the substantial influence of the Superintendent as well as the Assistant Superintendent's desire to institutionalize the reform.

This interpretation apparently sets up Carl Hansen as the bad guy stifling the good guys, the reformers. Were the Superintendent supportive, eager to reform, etc., would the MSD

have soared? Perhaps. That the Superintendent shaped the direction and initial scope of the concept, through his assistant, is undeniable. That it would have been a success had autonomy and funds been liberally granted, however, is doubtful. It may, then, be worthwhile to explore carefully one of Hansen's parting shots. "One thing I have learned," he said, "not only from this experience (MSD) but from others through my work in school administration is that if a project is proposed by outside elements is not successful, the blame falls on the schools never on the people who made the proposals."[16]

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CONCEPTUALIZING REFORM

Rather than review again the reformers proposals, it would be more useful to analyze three particular policy issues that were common to the ideology of reform in Washington: what role did the school play in fighting poverty? What role was the community to play in school affairs? Should school reform efforts have been directed toward serving the poor better or should there have been experimentation to improve school services? If clarity in conceptual design and awareness of policy consequences were missing, then Hansen's observation carries weight.

What role does the school play in fighting poverty?

One of the most tenaciously held assumptions of laymen and schoolmen is that education can eliminate the evil effects of poverty. Because schools touch every child, it can, many believe, improve morals, decrease crime and improve economic opportunity. It can lead anti-poverty forces and be an agent of social change.

WAY's first thrust at institutional change was not at welfare, adult employment, police administration but at schooling. Lifting achievement and preparation for employment--adequate schooling--was seen as the linchpin of a successful urban reform effort. UPO, initially stressed schooling as part of the community action program, but pulled back since UPO dollars weren't moving the school system in the direction the anti-poverty agency wished to go. Schooling, however, remained a high priority.

The Panel of Educational Research and Development never explicitly stated that improved schooling will help the poor once they graduate. But to infer that the Panel assumed a connection would not bend their intent. Or else why did they emphasize improved forms of math and science curriculum, teacher-training, use of non-professionals, etc.?

Carl Hansen and Norman Nickens shared the convictions of these reformers that schooling was pivotal in abolishing economic inequality. Testifying before Congress, Hansen remarked that "it is becoming obvious that the key to unlocking the dungeons of ignorance, poverty and disease is education. Education must provide the tools ... to attack these cancers of society at their inception...."[17] Two years later defending the school's requested budget, Hansen argued that "education ought to be considered as a national defense agency assigned to fight the enemies (poverty) within the nation just as the Pentagon wages the war in Vietnam ...."[18]

Nickens, just a few months after being named head of the sub-system, spoke to a group of teachers:

> Education seems to be the accepted hope to break this (poverty) cycle, but education must be retooled to meet this challenge....[19]

In a letter inviting Banks to an MSD program, Nickens wrote,

> We ultimately hope that from this new dynamic approach to education will emerge some ideas which will effectively deal with the problems of education which if not solved lead to ignorance and poverty.[20]

The second MSD proposal submission to UPO clearly stated the role of the sub-system:

> The Model School Division was created to provide the District Public Schools with the Research and Development capacity to create programs capable of breaking the poverty cycle.[21]

This shared conviction of reformers inside and outside the school system that better schooling will narrow the poverty gap represents a value choice more than a fact. What muddied the issue is that reformers confused the factors that directly and indirectly influenced poverty. Moreover, they gave little thought to the function and limits of schooling in this society.

Consider that the lack of money is central to any definition of poverty. What directly affects that condition would be access to jobs, paying above-poverty level wages, guaranteed income plans and the like. What would indirectly affect poverty would be training for jobs, better housing, improved welfare benefits, crime prevention programs and better schools. The former deals with the economic basis of poverty; the latter deals with the effects of poverty upon people. The indirect nature of the anti-poverty effort can be further spelled out in terms of the target group and time.

School programs aimed at four year olds, remedial reading, food and clothing efforts, cultural enrichment and vocational curriculum deal with poor children, not breadwinners, in the hope that improved achievement and behavior will equip the youngsters with necessary knowledge and skills to get a job and earn sufficient income to stay off the welfare rolls and out of prison. Obviously, this long-range approach will take anywhere from one to two decades to test its ultimate effectiveness.

Another step removed would be to change the attitudes and skills of teachers who deal with poor children. If teachers are more sensitive and skilled, poor children will achieve more. To push the indirectness of a school-based strategy even further would be those school programs that delegate power to poor parents to make policy. By changing the governance of the school, the hope is to have impoverished adults gain both the sense and reality of power and thereby through this renewed sense of control over their lives lift their childrens' achievement levels, which ultimately would decrease economic inequality.

The point of distinguishing between direct and indirect anti-poverty strategies is not to favor one approach over the other; it is to emphasize that the school can only wrestle indirectly with economic equality. Moreover, the further removed from direct strategies (jobs, etc.), indirect approaches lose their potency to remedy immediate conditions. In other words, while improved schooling is important it is severely limited in what it can do to end poverty; it does not, for example, give jobs to the poor and distribute income.[22] That schools can do something

about achievement and that achievement has some relationship to future job income and social effectiveness argue for the schools' utility in reducing inequality, but not creating equal economic opportunity.[23]

No agency committed to reform the D.C. schools, including school officials, pointed out the attenuated indirectness of using the schools to spearhead an attack upon urban decay and poverty. No agency committed to reform the D.C. schools, including school officials, hinted that trying to lift achievement of poor children to national norms seemed to be an impossible task, given the past record of the public schools. Silence on these issues. Indeed, when additional functions were heaped upon the schools--feeding, clothing children; schooling three year olds; community action; delinquency prevention--schoolmen eagerly gobbled up these functions and the dollars that accompanied them. And with each gulp, rhetoric soared. Reformers had confused the school's superior access to poor children--it touches every family--with its ability to lead anti-poverty forces.

This lack of analysis, on the part of school reformers, of what precisely what the system can and cannot do in fighting poverty led to constant confusion of goals and responsibilities. Would the MSD be successful when Cardozo children could read and write at national levels? Or would it be a success when the median income level in the Cardozo area met the level of another community in the city? Would the experiment be a success if community members actively participated in decision-making? Or would it be a success if over half of the experimental programs tried in Cardozo were disseminated throughout the system? Because there was little clarity about the school's role as an institution and its role in the war on poverty, reformers in D.C. continually fell into jurisdictional disputes over who was to do what, where and when.[24] Without clarity as to goals and responsibilities, no one was accountable. By the school taking on welfare and therapeutic functions, continued lower student achievement was answered by reference to poverty's effects upon children and insufficient resources to do the proper job, etc. More responsibilities heaped upon schools seemed to cut into the community's resolve to hold schools accountable for, at least, academic achievement. Thus, to evaluate the success or failure of MSD with children became virtually impossible. Those reformers who prided themselves on analyzing problems and proposing comprehensive rational changes must share some of the responsibility for the over-selling of the school and the subsequent confusion that blurred the direction school reform in the MSD traveled.

What role was the community to play in school affairs? Reformers analyzed the problems of urban decay and school ineffectiveness in terms of unresponsive, paralytic institutions. Institutional lethargy smothered responsiveness. Overcentralized authority, professional control over policy and excessive bureaucracy were identified as the culprits. Were there substantial changes, the reasoning went, revitalized schools, courts, hospitals could respond to poverty and its grim effects.

Jolting institutions into doing what they were supposed to do was the avowed aim of community participation. The theory was that through participation and involvement power would be distributed; and such power would generate options that professionals ignored or missed; participation would pump vitality into policy-making and give some measure of control to the community.

WAY, UPO and PERD all embraced community involvement in their proposals to the District schools. To each, however, the phrase had a different meaning. Even worse was that different interpretations of community involvement or action shifted as events swept by. WAY's view changed from a professionally-dominated decentralized neighborhood development center dispensing social services while utilizing block leaders as neighborhood workers to UPO's conceptualization:[25]

> (a major goal is) active and effective participation of the poor in the development and conduct of a program aimed at the expansion of their opportunities and the improvement of their skills.[26]

Even UPO's version of community action tacked back and forth, and understandably so, since OEO's conceptualization of the phrase contained diverse meanings. James Banks' intra-staff struggle over the pace of involving the poor whirled around the differing interpretations of community action. Resignations didn't end the battle.

While some intellectuals and administrators turned ambiguity into a strength, when policy matters and limited resources are involved, ambiguity nurtures uncertainty, even unproductive effort. Did community action mean organizing the power structure to attack poverty? Organizing the poor to expand their opportunities? Assist the power structure? Each represents a different policy choice. Changing mid- and top-level leadership at OEO and UPO led to the rise and fall of particular interpretations. Ambiguity, not clarity, dominated discussions on community action strategy and goals.

Similarly, the role of the school was muddy. If the school was seen as instrumental in cracking the poverty cycle, should school officials be helped to do a better job with poor children? Perhaps the poor should organize to expand their own educational opportunities. Or should poor people be organized to confront the school system in order to extract concessions?

If the communit action agency couldn't agree consistently on what the nature of participation should be the Superintendent and his Assistant could freely interpret what it meant. To MSD officials, talk about "maximum feasible participation" and community action was re-interpreted to mean advice, but not control from the community. PERD's version of community involvement was a governing council, drawn from school and university staff as well as artists, writers and "other interested people from the community;" it was subverted into another blue-ribbon advisory committee.[27] Community involvement in MSD was to be advisory, preferably through a council. But as the educational arm of the community action effort in D.C., UPO came under increasing pressure both internally and externally to have the schools reflect a more aggressive version of community action. They twisted arms.

In the November, 1965 proposal MSD submitted to UPO a four-part plan by which the sub-system would be involved in community action: a parent-planning committee, a school liason with each neighborhood development center, a school orientation program for UPO activities and community schools.[28] Of these proposals, the parent-planning committees and community schools were eventually implemented. These committees and a larger MSD Advisory Committee functioned at the lowest level of advisory status, that is, the venting of grievances and sharing of information. No decision-making power was shared with either committee.

The community schools, open afternoons and evenings, offered remedial skill courses, consumer education, etc. In effect, this was an administration-sponsored effort to involve low-income people in the schools, but mainly upon academic and social tasks uninvolved with questions of decision-making. Such was the movement that resulted from UPO pressure upon the public schools. When the MSD shifted its funding base to Title I, ESEA and Impact Aid, obviously UPO influence declined even further.

In short, when MSD was dependent upon UPO, the agency's uncertainty and waffling over what community action was, encouraged the school system to select devices least threatening to existing power relations.

Should school reform efforts have been directed toward serving the poor better or should there have been experimentation to improve school services? What made this policy issue tough was that no agency, including the schools, ever established in the early years of MSD a clear-cut priority between extending services and experimentation. The schools wanted action. WAY wanted research welded to an action program; PERD was committed to experimentation, and UPO, child of diverse ideologies and strategies, waffled between the two. See-sawing back and forth between initiating a raft of reading experiments and uplifting remedial programs, MSD mirrored the reformers' indecision between 1964-1967.

Tension between research and action went unresolved. What that meant operationally was that both kinds of programs were included in the sub-system. Yet, no one was satisfied. Experimental bureaucratic regulations, irregular collection of data, personnel hostile to research and spotty feedback--all conspired to frustrate experimental designs. On the other side, partisans of more services to poor children resented scarce dollars being spent on experiments that might or might not help children learn.

Each agency pushed its own formula for success. PERD wished to institute innovations and experiments in all school operations. "Experiment," the minutes of one meeting stated, "is necessary because we do not know enough about how to educate groups with which we are concerned.... We need the model system to learn, to discover answers."[29] Their vocabulary of change--innovation, models, demonstrations and experiments--were interchangeably used as if they were synonymous. They were not.

Experiments assume, for the most part, controls, a specific treatment, sufficient time for results to emerge and the risk of failure; innovations are usually considered to be changes based upon some data; demonstrations assume that something works and it should be tried out on a small scale; models could be experimental designs or used in the sense of demonstrations.[30]

The confusion in terms seems to stem from the Panel's optimism that the right kinds of change were possible if only the big city schools would try. New curriculum materials, team-teaching, inspired amateurs, in-service training, were implicit paths to follow although disclaimers against saying what the right thing to do dotted reports and minutes.

Yet so much was missing in their conceptualization. The complicated organizational consequences of beginning dozens of experiments, including the "management of the system itself," (each with the necessary controls) and launching them with hundreds of teachers and thousands of youngsters to run a number of years--none of this was mentioned. Nor were the complexities of such experimentation considered: high mobility of poor families as well as teacher attrition; freezing of certain techniques and materials in order for comparisons to be made; resistance of administrators and teachers to imposed experiments; the collection of massive data, etc. Nor were the implications considered of experiments designed by predominately white, affluent reformers and implemented by predominately black middle-class staff upon black, poor children. This was, of course, 1963 and the morality of using black children as objects of experimentation was not topical.[31] Nor, finally, was serious consideration given to the process of diffusion. With semi- or even complete autonomy called for, the complex organizational difficulties of disseminating results went unexplored.

Now, it is quite possible that the Panel report purposely chose a tone of conviction and optimism to persuade readers. To include organizational complexities, nuances and questions of morality might have undercut the points the Panel wished to make and cluttered up the text with too many details. Furthermore, it is very probable that many of these issues were raised at the various seminars. If they were, however, the printed record is blank on these points. Panel memos submitted to MSD, minutes of Panel seminars and conversations with the staff assistant at the time this writer worked in MSD suggest that the conviction and optimism were both real and firm. And that the issues went unclarified.[32]

Unfortunately, the perennial flaws in reform thinking have been precisely too much conviction and optimism--married to ample rhetoric--and insufficient clarity in detailing the complexities and possible consequences of change.

When Hansen struck back at WAY, he needed a prestigious reform plan to defuse criticism and secure the elusive federal dollar. Joseph Turner drafted the Superintendent's report to the Board requesting the adoption of a model sub-system committed to "across the board experimentation." If anyone at that time knew the consequences of that phrase, none spoke out with clarity or volume.

The Advisory Committee, the Panel's hope for maintaining the thrust for experimentation, shed very little light in what direction MSD should move. The former Executive Assistant to the Committee was less than charitable but right on target when she concluded:

> The Advisory Committee was ineffectual in confronting the school system in good part because it was not clear what it wanted the system to do.[33]

Hansen and Nickens used the rhetoric of experimentation. They continually demanded more funds from UPO and OEO for research, although they met with little success. While they used the right words, they, too, ignored the complex implications of an experimental strategy as well as the strategy itself. After the first batch of reading experiments was carried out, rhetoric about innovation and models wound down and virtually disappeared by 1967. As federal funding shifted from OEO to ESEA, and as the Superintendent broadened the Division's autonomy, fewer references to innovation, experimentation and sub-systems--except as historical footnotes--appeared. By 1970, a MSD publication stated:

> The MSD, at times, has been called an experiment; however, this concept is misleading, if not erroneous. The unit is, in reality, an established entity committed to the improvement of the quality of education for its students.[34]

Institutionalization was complete.

****

Within four years MSD moved in zig-zag fashion from a project launched in an orgy of optimism to a decentralized program of the D.C. public schools aimed at improved schooling for the disadvantaged. While the quality of leadership, bureaucracy, chance and funding helped to shape the direction MSD traveled the dominant, interrelated factors were the reform perceptions of the main participants, the degree of precision to which each participant conceptualized goals, strategies and consequences of their reform and, lastly, the policy-making power each had to turn ideas into reality.

While reform impetus came from outside the system, decision-making power rested with the Superintendent. His perceptions of the role of schools, poverty, the goals of reform controlled the initial direction MSD took. While alterations and shifts did occur, no outside agency intent upon reform could muster sufficient clout to effectively wrest away Hansen's hold upon policy-making and implementation. Yet, it would be simple-minded to explain the direction MSD traveled solely in terms of Hansen's political control of the administrative and policy-making machinery.

Reformers seldom shared common perceptions of what the goals for school reform should be; nor did they develop common strategies to be used; nor did they contemplate the organizational complexities of their particular agendas. It was as if each had a fling at reform. They hurled themselves at the System, bounced off, then, throwing up their hands in disgust, left the scene with only a knot on the head to show for their efforts.

The major flaw in the reformer's approach--other than their fragmented, uncoordinated attack upon the system--was their belief that reform can be achieved in one fell swoop. Hopefully, in the current fiscal year. Topple Hansen, WAY proposed, and reform will permeate the system. Had it succeeded WAY would have discovered the bitter, complicated truth that D.C. school governance, bureaucracy and classroom operations were not simply functions of one man leadership. Conciliation--UPO's strategy--only reinforced the system's inertia and resistance to basic change. Persuading Hansen to adopt a new idea--PERD's strategy--worked except Hansen chose to selectively interpret what a model subsystem was and the Panel was powerless to do anything about it. Reformers shifted back and forth between a bad-men theory and bad-system theory of analysis. Both were simplistic.

When Hansen did resign in 1967 it was not because of any of the previous strategies (although reformers had inadvertently created a climate for such a change); it was because the composition of the judicially-appointed Board had changed. On a number of issues, beginning in 1966, the Board had refused to comply with the Superintendent's wishes as it had done previously. Instead, it decided to reassert its legal initiative for policy-making that Hansen had turned into his perogative.[35]

Reform is seldom instant. Yet reformers impatient for change mixed up a batch of recipes for instant reform. It wasn't that these ideas didn't work just because Hansen dominated the system; they didn't work because few short cuts to school reform exist. New men, new ideas, patient analysis of leverage points of change and intelligent exploiting of opportunities as they arise may well be the crucial ingredients for reform success.[36] Mayor Richard Lee, for example, manuevered his own nominees onto the New Haven Board of Education in the late 50's and early 60's; they, according to Robert Dahl, appointed schoolmen partial to changes the Board wanted.[37] Philadelphia Board President Richardson Dilworth brought in Mark Shedd as Superintendent in 1967 and gave him a relatively free hand to institute changes. The choice of Shedd was the culmination of years of patient insinuation of key persons into pivotal institutional positions where they could bring their influence to bear upon school reform.[38]

To impatient, politically vulnerable federal agencies, time was exactly what they didn't have much of. Recall that the rise and demise of WAY, PERD, the Advisory Committee and UPO all occurred in less than three years. Thus, the toppling or co-opting of Hansen seemed to be the best strategy, given limited time and dollars. And when that failed, reformers retired from the scene seemingly convinced that nothing could be done to change the Washington schools.

Impatient reformers chose a tactic that met their particular needs and resources rather than selecting strategies that fit the problems to be dealt with. For example, Gail Saliterman concluded that a more powerful strategy the Advisory Committee could have pursued was to have hired lawyers to draft legislation freeing the MSD from school system restraints. Obviously, it would have taken more time and a longer investment of resources than the tactics they pursued.[39] Other groups and individuals in Washington lobbied for election of a school board; the law was passed in 1968. Still others pursued reform through the courts. The Hobson v. Hansen decision had a profound and immediate impact upon the entire school system, far more than any of the previous stabs at change. All of these alternatives were openly discussed in Washington reform circles between 1963-1968.

In other words, given the limited time and money and lack of political clout, reformers chose to tilt with a Superintendent rather than explore ways that would have had more of a long term prospect for success. In this respect, reformers must share responsibility for the direction MSD took.

Chapter 3

THE MODEL SCHOOL DIVISION: EIGHT YEARS LATER

The process of institutionalization begun in 1967 was complete by 1969. A reorganization plan submitted to the Board in the summer of 1968 was finally approved in early 1969. The plan enlarged central office functions, spelled out in detail how a decentralized unit would operate, and created a community involvement mechanism. It also established that the Division would receive a "fair share" of the regular budget, i.e. if the rest of the system is spending $750 per pupil then that figure would be multiplied by 17,000 Cardozo area children--the amount becoming MSD's fair share; federal funds were over and above the fair share allocation.

No issue of autonomy arose in reorganization since the process of gaining control over existing school functions within MSD begun in 1965 was the operating definition of autonomy. "It is clear," the report stated, "that the MSD cannot be autonomous in the same sense as an independent school district is; and there is little desire on the part of MSD staff for a radical break in ties with the system."[1] The purpose of the reorganization plan was "to gain enough control of the system's functions to shape an educational program relevant to the community the MSD serves."[2] With the implementation of those portions of the reorganization that did not require additional funds, by the end of 1969 the MSD was a decentralized region.

The MSD had become another part of the school system, perhaps a bit more independent and affluent than the rest of the system but nonetheless in the family. Objectives of MSD now reflected institutionalization.

a. To improve the quality of instruction....

b. To extend educational services....

c. To develop interaction and involvement of the community with the schools....

d. To develop ways of improving administrative services....[3]

Similarly, rhetoric about MSD as the "experimental arm" of the school system was vigorously eliminated in favor of a more modest view of innovation.

> The Division is committed to the concept that any innovation in education is justified only on the basis of its effectiveness in providing for individualized learning and the social and emotional needs of its students.... Major innovative programs have been tried in the schools; however, very little real experimentation has been carried on. In all endeavors, the programs, techniques and materials have been carefully screened for potential effectiveness and relatedness to Model School Division objectives....[4]

Thus, institutionalization aligned the Division more closely with the aims of the larger system. More stress was placed upon traditional efforts: improving children's basic skills; for children "to experience an expanded personal potential;" students "to seek and maintain positive relationships with others...."[5] Reading improvement, curriculum development, staff retraining, and community schools were emphasized.[6] Holdovers from the early years such as pre-schools, non-graded organization, team-teaching, cultural enrichment, of course, continued but the center of gravity shifted from these scattered efforts to bread-and-butter school items.[7]

What retained the flavor of change, maintaining the MSD reputation for reform, was the Innovation Team. Begun under Title I funding in 1967, it gained local fame and national recognition during its brief existence.[8]

The Team was an experiment but not in the usual sense of controls or measuring particular variables. Since so little was known about schools and their organization, Mary Lela Sherburne, founder and first Team Leader, wrote, "the need was to act empirically and practically. Most would be learned from using the inductive process...."[9] Interested in organizational change through alternative ways of structuring groups, the team was a "temporary system" of "change agents" bent on altering relationships and authority. More specifically, what was the Team? Ike Gordy, second leader of the Team described it.

> The Team was a group of classroom teachers (15-20) charged with providing an in-service program for teachers. What's unique about this? Simply the fact that <u>teachers</u> (original emphasis) are responsible for the program....

> Given no authority and no formal evaluative powers, this group has designed and implemented the MSD in-service program for four years.[10]

Every evaluation of the Team gave it high marks for services to individual teachers, specifically their impact upon instructional and curricular approaches.[11] Their fiscal and administrative independence gave them enormous leverage in supplying teachers with materials, obtaining substitutes for teachers to attend workshops and just freely walking in and out of schools without kow-towing to principals--a significant freedom in inner-city schools. Workshops on black awareness materials, innovative instructional devices, and skill training as well as two large-scale Summer institutes for MSD teachers, stressing reading improvement were held.

The Team's instantaneous response to the assassination of Martin Luther King captured national admiration. Fearful that principals and teachers would continue on with their previous lessons, the Team worked through a weekend putting together a study guide for teachers to use when school resumed. The guide urged both teachers and students to air their feelings about the rioting and the death of King. The outpouring of student art and writing was assembled, reproduced and put into student hands within a week and a half. "Tell It Like It Is" put the Team on the national educational map. Then, as Sherburne wrote, "the problems of success--demands poured in."

> People wanted to meet and see the Team, to visit the schools, to take films of what took place in them, to see what kinds of workshops had been conducted and there was a hue and cry to describe the model that had operated in order that other school systems could do it.[12]

The concept of the Team as a "Temporary System" of change agents seemed to materialize within the following two years. The Team was continually called upon to put out fires in other parts of the school system--dissatisfied teachers and community in Georgetown, reading workshops for Dunbar area teachers, sessions with principals on black awareness, etc. By 1970, the Team was wrestling with the complexities of how to change the larger system; individual Team members were given special assignments outside of the Division by their former boss, Nickens, now Deputy

Superintendent and the new Superintendent, Hugh Scott. Within the year, however, it had dissolved. Most of the Team members were pursuing separate careers; some moved on to administration, some joined consulting organizations and universities and others went out to reproduce Teams in other cities. Few returned to the classroom.

> They have set up to work outside the school system to encourage change within and without. They view themselves as human 'packages' in which change is not sold as a product but offered as a dynamic interaction which can only be embodied in people and their vision.[13]

While the Team existed, it was synonymous with MSD. Its demise (temporary system or not) deprived the Division of a significant force for classroom innovation.

Less than a year after the Team's departure, the MSD itself was poised on the edge of submersion into the new Superintendent's plan of decentralization. In October, 1970 when Superintendent Scott was appointed, he was charged by the Board to implement the recently adopted Academic Achievement Plan.[14] But the new Superintendent did not fully exploit the MSD's half-decade experience with basic skill instruction or its trials with decentralization. While key MSD personnel were detailed to executive posts or used sporadically on committee assignments elsewhere in the system, little else was tried to diffuse their experience into the larger system. Indifference seemed to have been the Superintendent's position on the MSD. In effect, MSD had become so much a part of the system that it was like an old tattered slipper--comfortable but on the verge of being tossed away.[15]

WHY SURVEY MSD LEADERS?

The twenty-six administrators' survey in this study were the key persons charged to implement system-wide policies.[16] Yet they were also the dominant participants in policy-making for the MSD. As participants, they determined what courses of action, what tactics and what routines were to be pursued within the Division. In other words, while the Board of Education formulated broad goals and objectives for the entire system, MSD officials could and did establish sub-objectives and other non-conflicting

goals. Moreover, they formulated procedures to accomplish these aims as well as establishing routines in administration. This was a top-to-bottom process with central office administrators making policy for the Division and the principals implementing those policies, but also deciding upon policies within their buildings.[17]

Budget, overall staffing, planning, and evaluation issues were decided downtown; principal involvement was advisory, mainly through monthly staff meetings, committee work and informal conversations with the central office. Implementation issues such as programming at the building level and allocation of resources within the school--which become policy issues for teachers and students--were decided by principals, for the most part, with downtown administrators supporting decisions made in the individual buildings.

Within the larger policy framework laid down by the Board and Superintendent, MSD leadership decided curricular, instructional and staff development questions. MSD leadership, for example, initiated the Innovation Team, summer reading institutes, new curricular materials, special service programs well before the rest of the system. Thus, these leaders' views on what the nature of school problems are, what changes should be made and the strategies to achieve these changes become important in this study in two ways.

First, the twenty-six spent, on the average, six out of the eight years of the Division's life as administrators. They were veterans. Their views on reform, innovation and what schools should do would carry great weight, given the nature of the policy-formation process described above.[18] Second, their current views might further explain why MSD remained the way it was. In short, an exploration of the relationship between the perceptions of reform held by MSD administrators in 1972 and the direction the reform took might explain, in part, why MSD stayed the way it was.

More specifically, there were a set of hypotheses that guided the survey of MSD administrators. It was hypothesized that the administrators while differing among themselves, would tend to analyze the problems of the system in terms of the larger community; they would pose strategies and solutions that would leave the structural components of the system untouched; for the most part, these strategies and solutions would be piecemeal and ad hoc focusing upon instruction and curriculum as opposed to rearranging power relationships. If this held, then the explanation for these views was hypothesized to be certain background factors of the personnel in the system.[19]

The hypothesis and the related concepts of analysis of problems, reform strategies, and solutions was operationalized in this manner:

1. A case study of an urban school system, very similar to Washington, D.C. was written.

2. Ten scales, divided into three categories of problems, strategies, and solutions, were constructed.

3. A list of questions on background and experience were asked of each administrator. (See following pages for three items)

FINDINGS

Profile of MSD Administrator

The typical administrator was a fifty year old black woman. Only in the five secondary schools in the MSD, males predominated. Born in the District, the administrator went through local schools, graduated from Dunbar High School, and later, D.C. Teachers College (Miner). By 1972, she had been with the MSD at least six years; her first promotion had come in less than two years.

Table 1.

Administrative Profile

a. 58% were female

b. 77% were schooled in D.C.

c. 77% earned their Bachelor's degree in D.C.

d. 70% who entered the MSD received a promotion within two years

THE SCHOOLS OF MORRIS

The following description of an urban school system is fictitious. It is drawn from a number of characteristics common to most big-city school systems.

Morris is a large midwestern city of over 500,000 people. Since World War II, black migration into Morris and a white exodus have combined to make the schools predominately black in both student population and staff. The familiar pattern of a black central city surrounded by white suburbs exists in Morris, except for a rapidly growing Spanish-speaking ghetto located in the eastern half of the city. Just a few years ago, the elected Board of Education attained a black majority, fired its elderly superintendent and hired, for the first time, a young outsider.

The population shift also produced high concentrations of poor families in several areas of the city. Attempts at urban renewal shoved more black families into sprawling ghettos in the inner city and western edges of the city. The last census revealed that over one-quarter of all families in Morris were poor by federal standards. Dilapidated housing, increasing percentages of families on welfare, and spiralling crime--the usual grim statistics accompanying poverty--existed in Morris. By 1965, out of 200 schools in the system, over 75 were designated as Title I.

As in most other cities in America in the 1960's, militant civil rights and, later, black activist groups attacked the schools for discriminatory policies and harmful education. They produced statistics showing that over 50% of Morris High School graduates who took the Selective Service Test had failed it; over 75% of all students in all grades were falling behind national norms in reading, math and science; even worse, the figures showed that students were achieving less and less as they continued through school. Overcrowding in schools still plagued the Spanish-speaking and middle-income black sections of the city. Some school buildings were a century old, reports revealed, but most, built over the last three decades, were in need of repair. Finally, civil rights and black activist efforts revealed that the central administration concentrated decision-making in their second floor offices of the Barbar Building, downtown headquarters of the school system.

The Superintendent, Board of Education, central administration, principals, and teachers all came under attack. When riots erupted in the black ghettos, pressure from black activists

increased. Local government officials joined the chorus of criticism. The Mayor and City Council which annually reviewed the system's budget had come under insistent pressure from prominent citizens and groups to "do something about the schools." By and large, the school system had run its operation independent of city government although they were legally bound to abide by the city's personnel, accounting and budgeting procedures. They were one of the city departments and had to compete with the police, welfare and recreation departments for funds; but they seldom engaged in the usual partisan politics that dominated city hall.

By the late 1960's, a number of outside universities and private organizations had studied the school system and recommended numerous changes. Moreover, a sizable investment of federal funds had been made in the Morris Schools. Titles I and III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Impact Aid and a dozen other federal programs produced every curricular and instructional innovation tried elsewhere. With these new monies and additional budget requests, per-pupil spending climbed over $1,000 per child, well above what many other cities allocated. Reading programs, New Math, demonstration schools, teacher-training projects, community control in a handful of schools, retraining of principals--all had been attempted or were underway in Morris. Testing of every student in reading and math achievement twice a year had been introduced in an effort to determine results of new programs. Finally, bussing of poor black and Spanish-speaking children into middle-income schools was begun in a dozen schools. Some of these efforts showed great promise; some showed little.

By the early 1970's, critics inside and outside the school system shouted for more effective action while despairing of any substantial improvement in black schools. Joining the cry for change was the newly-recognized teachers' union. While concerned with protecting teacher rights and gaining a larger voice for teachers in policy matters, the union seldom missed a chance to tweak the administration when they stumbled.

But even without the union there were many critics. Some pointed at the bureaucracy and said there were too many administrators. Other critics condemned teachers for not trying harder or not knowing what to do with their children. Principals were flailed for being too timid with the central office. Board members were scored for not standing behind the Superintendent. And the superintendents who served during these years, including the young incumbent, all endured a barrage of criticism.

To put it briefly, reform of the Morris school system was urgently needed.

QUESTIONS:

1. What would you see as the main problems of the Morris school system? Why?

2. If you found yourself in a position to recommend changes, which ones would you recommend to improve the Morris school system? Why did you choose these changes?

3. If you found yourself in a position to act on these recommendations, what steps would you take to implement these changes? Why would you choose these strategies?

ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS

Analysis of problems is in environmental and situational terms	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Analysis of school problems is in terms of a lack of programs or leadership
Emphasis is on the school and its relationship to the larger community and society	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Emphasis is on the school as such without consideration of the larger community and society
Analysis of problems seems to assume that overall educational system needs basic changes in philosophy and organization	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Analysis of problems seem to assume that overall educational system is basically sound but weak in specific areas

STRATEGIES

Strategy suggests top to bottom change, beginning at top-level and filtering downward throughout system	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Strategy suggest bottom to top change, beginning at school level and filtering upward
Strategy focuses upon organizational and structural change	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Strategy focuses upon improving relations with attitudes of people within organizations
Strategy stresses representation and involvement of diverse groups in change process	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Strategy makes no provision for representation and involvement of diverse groups in change process

SOLUTIONS

Solutions involve basic structural changes in school system	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Solutions involve specific, practical, non-structural changes
Solutions involve explicit reference to power and its redistribution	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Solutions involve no explicit reference to power or its redistribution
Solutions stress broad, long-term plans for change	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Solutions stress immediate short-term, ad hoc plans for change
Solutions involve training of personnel	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Solutions omit reference to training of personnel

INFORMATION SHEET

NAME_____ CURRENT POSITION_____

BIRTHDATE_____DATE YOU BEGAN CURRENT POSITION _____

DATE YOU BEGAN WORKING FOR MODEL SCHOOL DIVISION_____

PLEASE LIST THE POSITIONS YOU HAVE HELD IN THIS SYSTEM OR OTHER SCHOOL SYSTEM:

POSITION_____CITY_____ DATES_____

POSITION_____CITY_____ DATES_____

POSITION_____CITY_____ DATES_____

POSITION_____CITY_____ DATES_____

PLEASE LIST THE COLLEGES YOU HAVE ATTENDED:

1. _____DEGREE_____ DATES_____

2. _____DEGREE_____ DATES_____

3. _____DEGREE_____ DATES_____

4. _____DEGREE_____ DATES_____

IN WHAT CITIES DID YOU ATTEND ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS?

ELEMENTARY_____DATES_____

SECONDARY_____DATES_____

Table 2.

Age of Administrators

Age	Administrators (26)
26-35	0
36-45	7
46-55	13
56 & over	5
age not given	1

Compared to her colleagues in the rest of the system, she was similar on many counts. The most recent survey obtained was taken of all school system personnel in 1967. The profile read:

> The typical elementary school principal was a Negro woman; the typical secondary school principal was a Negro man. Almost half held the principals at each level are between 46-55 years old; about two-thirds are over 46 years old. Most of the Negro principals were born in or around the District of Columbia.[20]

On two items there were significant differences between the MSD and rest of the system. There were higher percentages of MSD central office administrators who were female and higher percentages of MSD personnel who graduated from Dunbar and D.C. Teachers College than the rest of the system.

Scales

Of the ten scales rated, five contained significant levels of agreement between judges; five showed little agreement. The numerical scale was 1 to 7.

Table 3.

Scale	Judges' Mean Score	Agreement of Judges
1	3.1	W-.427*
2	3.1	W-.304*
3	4.2	W-.176
4	3.2	W-.056
5	3.7	W-.280*
6	3.8	W-.385*
7	4.3	W-.200
8	4.7	W-.176
9	4.2	W-.163
10	4.5	W-.659*

To establish agreement between judges, Kendall's coefficient of Concordance W was used. The W range is 0 to 1.0. To establish the level of reliability, for twenty-six respondents, the W scores were converted to a chi square table. The scales with asterisks were the ones that indicated high levels of significant reliability of agreement. Consensus of judges, it should be pointed out, only indicate that the judges were using similar standards when they rated responses of the administrators. Consensus does not mean that the judgements are correct.[21]

In analyzing the problems affecting schools, suggesting solutions and strategies, administrators securely staked out a middle ground. On Scales 1 and 2, the administrators as a group leaned slightly toward analyzing problems of the school in terms of the larger community. It was hypothesized that they would have scored in the 1-2 range. Both mean scores were 3.1. Some responses:

> . One problem is not meeting the needs of blacks in the area. The low achievement, poverty and all. The problem is to find out ways of alleviating them.

. Well, basically the main problem of low-income jobs, really, that affects the school. Parents can't get jobs, live in sub-standard housing, don't have money for food, clothes--all these multiple problems.

. Actually there are so many problems not of the school's making. There are social and economic problems. The make-up of the population, money and the lack of it in the system. The city's population is made up of poor families and with influences what the kids come to school with. Housing, crime all affect the kids. Eliminating some of the social ills, doing something about the family structure, giving security to the family, better housing, clothing and nutrition--if all of these were available, then kids could come to school in a better frame of mind. Families would come in to school and work on it.

. Let me see, if I can put into words. I think it is the lack of unified purpose of all people concerned. Lack of dedication to a cause of all who are concerned with children. I blame the Board, central administration, teachers, parents; I blame the principals because each is protecting himself, playing a game; each one is saying look at the other one. I think we are all to blame.

Only a few were as direct as this administrator. Most of the responses were more ambiguous than the above; nonetheless, MSD leaders perceived the problems of schooling more in environmental terms rather than in system deficits.

On Scale 5, the hypothesis was that MSD leaders would have scored at the 6-7 end of the scale indicating that the best strategy was to change relationships between school people and improving attitudes rather than emphasize organizational and structural changes. The mean score of 3.7, again indicates that as a group the administrators again staked out securely a middle

ground with individual responses moving to either end of the scale. One administrator said:

> The first change I would make or rather recommend is to look for persons who would serve in leadership roles who have demonstrated essential qualities of leadership. If you can get these kinds of people, you have accomplished 70% of your necessary reforms. Next I would try to improve interpersonal relationships throughout the school system by endeavoring to create a team approach to education. The team is so important, sometimes I use the comparison with an athletic team. You have to have good players, a good coach and back-up resources. There is a lot of competition, but the rewards are there.... The school system is about people and unless people can solve people problems, the system won't be dealt with....

When organizational change was mentioned, it usually took the following lines:

> . I think that there should be some kind of supervision to make people accountable. There should be a team of auditors, experts out of the Superintendent's office; they should be successful people. They would come into my school and check my files, check the children--those climbing the walls and those keeping quiet. Then they should make recommendations--remember they should tell me only a couple of times about how I should treat my children, teachers and parents. They should observe the school and then make a report and then I should be held accountable for implementing the recommendations....
>
> . ... the school system should be decentralized to be more responsive to people; you have to have fewer people responsible to you. If you have 90 schools, you can answer questions but that's all.

> . I guess the most important change is that you need a business manager type to run the school system, not the usual educator who knows about reading and writing.

Similarly, on Scale 6, administrators tilted slightly (3.8) toward pursuing the strategy of non-involvement of diverse groups in changing the system but not with the hypothesized strength. Administrators often put the strategy of change in this manner:

> What steps would I take to implement these changes? I'd call top staff together to inform them of goals; I guess there would be an element of manipulation but I would have them come up with the changes they would want. They would probably be pretty close to what I would; if not, then changes would have to be mandated. Then I'd get top staff to begin a public relations campaign with political, educational and parent groups to get their ideas.

A few did say:

> The first change I would make is to bring the community--I mean storekeepers and parents--into the school system. Community boards of education, open door policy for parents, etc. We tend to keep doors closed because we don't want people to see...

Scale 10 showed the strongest tendency supporting the initial hypothesis. Administrators as a group scored a mean of 4.5; they omitted reference to training of staff in initiating programs of change. While individual administrators were sensitive to the necessity of training and re-training of school personnel in order to implement the solutions they proposed, most were not. Fourteen made no reference to training of personnel. Of the twelve that did, half made a passing reference to "staff development" or teachers "taking courses."

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One could reasonably expect that administrators in a sub-system birthed in reform and committed on paper to continuous improvement to analyze school problems, would pose strategies and solutions in a broad, comprehensive manner; one would expect that the totality of the situation would be emphasized; one would expect sensitivity to power and structural issues within the system. Yet, these expectations would only set up a straw man to be torn down. Too much of that kind of research has been contrived. Of more importance to the researcher was to establish what the reform views of administrators were and then try to explain them.

While there is some evidence to support the initial hypothese, the methodology used was insufficiently sensitive to yield conclusively support for the predictions. Four scale scores, for example, supported the initial predictions but the judges' ratings showed substantial disagreement. In addition, other methodological problems dealt with elsewhere prevent building generalizations. There is some evidence that MSD leaders perceived problems and reform in a piecemeal, non-structural manner, uncritically accepting the system, but the pieces lack sufficient coherence to make a substantial case.

What can be done, however, based upon what fragments of data have been uncovered, is to speculate about the relationships between the MSD administrators' views and other factors that might have produced those views. Speculation is all that can be offered. Hopefully, others interested in the linkage between the perceptions of school leadership toward reform, who those school leaders are, and their impact upon what happens will explore it with more resources, cooperation, and luck.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSIONS AND SPECULATIONS

Three linked factors played a large part in shaping the Model School Division. First, the reform perceptions of policy-making participants; second, how each participant conceptualized goals, strategies and consequences of reform, and third, the policy-making power each had to convert ideas into reality. MSD remained what it was--and here the evidence is less convincing and more speculative--because of the background and training of administrative leadership within the Division.

While the thrust for change came from outside the system, policy-making power rested with the Superintendent between 1963-1967. His perceptions of the role of the schools, professionalism, poverty, the goals of reform shaped the initial direction MSD took. Clearly, shifts in direction occurred yet no outside reform agency could muster sufficient strength to crack the Superintendent's grip upon policy-making and implementation. Yet it would be simplistic to explain the direction MSD traveled solely in terms of the Superintendent's control over the administrative machinery.

Reformers lacked common perceptions, goals and strategies for changing the schools; moreover, they didn't consider the organizational complexities that would flow from their particular agendas for change. Aside from their flawed analyses, the major weaknesses in their approach was their belief that reform can be achieved quickly and cleanly. Confidence and immediacy buoyed up the reformers' temperments but too often dirtied up their analysis of problems. Their hopes dashed, many pointed to Hansen's domination of the system; but it wasn't that simple. Reformers either forgot or chose to ignore that few short cuts to meaningful, substantial school reform exist. Impatient reformers chose tactics that met their particular needs and resources rather than selecting strategies that fit the problems to be dealt with. In short, with little time, few dollars and limited power but imbued with fervent optimism reformers chose to tilt with a Superintendent rather than explore other alternatives that might have had more of a long-term prospect for success.

Significance of Conclusions:

1. POWER AND PROFESSIONALISM UNDERLAY THE STRUGGLE FOR REFORM in D.C.

Each round that Hansen fought, first in confronting Goldberg, and later, his arms' length embrace with Banks, involved

the domains of professionalism and control over the school decision-making machinery. Hansen's view of the world was solidly embedded in a belief system that stressed the importance of professional schoolmen making educational decisions. Buttressing this belief was his professional schoolman's awareness that critics' shotgun blasts would blow holes in his credibility; holes through which would slip political control over the administrative machinery of the system.

Hansen and Nickens manfully maintained the stance of professionals in their alternating embraces and battles with outside reformers. But they knew all too well what the conflict was about. Hansen's use of consultants, advisory councils, and external reports on the system revealed a shrewd school politician who knew well which levers to pull, which buttons to press. The reform battle in Washington was a struggle over who would control the change process.

2. THE FUNCTION OF REFORMERS

While reformers often spoke of overhauling the system, retooling the organization, turning things around--their performance seldom matched their vocabulary. Yet time and perspective often define success or failure.

Where the D.C. schools were on January 1, 1963 and where the system was five years later illustrates that changes did, indeed, occur. Few would probably satisfy the reformers' appetite for change but nonetheless the institution had visibly altered.

MSD still flourished; new curricula, new instructional techniques; new forms of class and school organization emerged; staff development and a host of other innovations appeared in the system. In one form or another, these changes have become institutionalized and exist in 1972.[1]

What reformers had done was to create a climate for change; they shoved the system's leadership into co-opting particular reform programs and strategies--even to the point of taking subsequent credit for the changes. In short, reformers accounted for the incremental changes that occurred between 1963-1968. By playing a gadfly role, by criticizing the system, its leadership, its motivations, reformers nudged the schools off dead-center forcing the institution to make rough assessments of its performance and take appropriate mid-course adjustments. While some

observers might call this process muddling through, and a fantastic waste of energy given the results, it is no small feat to spur a major urban institution spending hundreds of millions of dollars each year to minimally change. While such a function may not have been the glorious role reformers saw themselves playing, it nonetheless remains an important one.

3. THE LIMITS OF DIRECT FEDERAL INTERVENTION

Unlike the other states, no state department of education stands between the District of Columbia schools and the federal government. What has been described is, basically, a case study of direct federal intervention in behalf of reform. In short, the delivery of federal services and dollars is direct with no usual mediating agencies. Recent examples of this bypassing of state bureaucracies have been the Urban-Rural School Program, Experimental School Programs and Model City efforts. WAY, PERD, OEO (through its local arm UPO) dealt directly with Hansen, Nickens and local officials.

Recent studies have confirmed the impact of federal funds upon local school systems. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Economic Opportunity Act and other federal legislation have generated innovations at the local level.[2] But the quality of those innovations and their impact upon student performance has been, at best, uncertain. Delivery of federal programs in these cases, was indirect. For the most part, categorical funds and demonstration projects were filtered through state departments of education. As one observer noted, "It is not surprising that federal influence has been diluted at the local level."[3]

The MSD is an example, however, of direct (albeit uncoordinated) federal attempt to reform a local school system. The federal impact could be assessed in terms of its creation of a climate of change, an unfreezing of opposition to reform. This did occur but seems to have been an unintended outcome of federal intervention. Or impact could be counted up in federally funded programs within MSD or services provided that previously didn't exist. Such a tally would clearly establish federal influence but it would obscure the significance of what, indeed, happened.

Federal intervention revealed the flexibility of an institution shrewdly using its limited resources to survive what it perceived as a potentially damaging attack. It turned to its

own ends the intentions, plans and dollars of federal reformers. While critics describe school systems as rigid, inflexible institutions, what happened in the District of Columbia revealed local leadership that bent, shifted and, in Muhammed Ali's phrase, "danced like a butterfly and stung like a bee." For a while, that is.

By 1967, Hansen's string had run out. His departure and ensuing events were in part, due to unforseen ripple effects of government intervention. By that time, however, federal reformers had already retired from the local scene convinced of their failure to basically change the system.

In the instance of Washington, D.C. direct federal intervention into the operations of a reluctant school system illustrates one type of local response. In such a situation, federal influence is severely limited, perhaps, even counterproductive.

SPECULATION

Conclusions suggesting why MSD became what it was do not explain why it became fully institutionalized, the same as the rest of the system by 1972. Because the data will not support conclusive statements, all that can be done is to take the pieces of evidence revealed by the survey and weave together a speculative explanation. Readers should view this exploration more as a brief hypothetical essay rather than firm results from data.

One significant piece of evidence that demands interpretation is the unusually high degree of uniformity in age, training and background of MSD administrators.[4] What impact might such uniformity have upon the sub-system?

First, one must assume that it was no accident. The selection process for MSD administrators is relatively closed; persons chosen are those who MSD officials want.[5] The steps of the process are as follows:

> When an opening appeared for a central office position or school principalship, the position was advertised within the entire school system. Anyone with a Masters' degree and teaching experience could apply. After completion of an

> application, each candidate was interviewed by a panel, of whom at least the majority were MSD personnel. The decision to select a candidate was made at the completion of the interview but not announced until the Board of Education approved it. Seldom was a panel choice over-ruled by the Superintendent or Board of Education. Basically, this process was the same used elsewhere in the system except for the high proportion of panel members coming from a particular operating unit.

One top MSD administrator said that since 1967,

> Nickens always selected his own principals. On the panel there would be the Assistant Superintendent and one of his assistants and other people from around the city. We never wanted to have a stacked deck. But 90% of the time the choice was Nickens' or Diggs'.[6]

What this process yielded were highly qualified, highly credentialed, experienced individuals who had spent, on the average, twenty-five years in the District schools as both students and teachers prior to their selection as MSD administrators. Similarity in formative experiences within the segregated school system combined to kinship, fraternal, social and religious ties tightened the bonds of familiarity even further. Few individuals who applied for a MSD post went before the panel without most members of that panel knowing a great deal about the candidate beyond his or her professional credentials.

Once in the MSD, administrators were promoted at least once within two years, a rate almost double what occurred elsewhere in the system. Movement up the administrative ladder was speedy. One principal was appointed to the MSD in late 1967; less than a year later he was selected Assistant Superintendent, succeeded Norman Nickens. Another individual was promoted within six months. Of the fourteen who were promoted within two years, half received their first promotion within one year.

When these three elements are combined, that is, commonality of experience, selection process and rapid promotion policy, the concept of organizational socialization suggests possible application to the MSD.

A school system socializes its members through selection policies and organization rewards and sanctions. The process, depending upon how rigorously it is applied, results in a common pool of beliefs about what is accepted and what is unacceptable. The speculation, then, is that MSD administrators were socialized to perceive school problems, strategies and goals in roughly similar ways.

Assuming that the top leadership of MSD tacitly had in mind what kinds of people they wanted, the selection process yielded a group of administrators remarkably similar in background (not only among themselves but to the top leaders in the Division) and rewarded them with rapid promotion, compared to the rest of the system. In short, the selection procedures and promotions were formal institutional means of securing uniformity in performance as well as ideology.

Buttressing the formal organizational socialization--and here are the numerous untapped areas for research--were the informal groupings that reinforced ideology and behavior. Again, the fragmented data can only support speculation. Numerous small clubs of school administrators--the Schoolmen, for example, of which Nickens was a member--met for years combining sociability and professional concerns. Fraternal orders, sororities, church membership, poker clubs, the whole social apparatus of middle-class black urban life point to a powerful (and, sadly, unexplored) influence in sanctioning certain kinds of ideology and performance of school administrators.

None of this, of course, is unique to blacks in Washington, D.C. Boston, New York and other school systems--large and small--with high percentages of ethnic groups who have gained partial or full control of the system seem to duplicate the District's pattern.

For Washington, the immediate past suggests additional evidence. Prior to 1954, the system was segregated into two Divisions. A great deal of in-breeding developed in the administration of both white and black divisions. Whites often tapped local products, i.e. graduates of Wilson branch of D.C.T.C.; blacks, graduates of Dunbar and Miner. Such traditions were well-imbedded in the dual system prior to desegregation.

With the Bolling v. Sharpe decision (the local version of the Brown decision), the two divisions disappeared in one stroke in 1954. Black administrators were either redistributed throughout the system, usually in subordinate roles to white administrators or as principals of all black schools or simply demoted. Under Hansen and his predecessors, most key administrative posts in the system were held by whites. By 1963, only a few blacks had penetrated white dominated top management positions.

In 1965, when Hansen selected an able white principal to replace a retiring Assistant Superintendent (the highest ranking black administrator) over two black qualified, experienced candidates (one of whom was Nickens) black citizen committees lambasted the Superintendent. The ensuing uproar was not lost on white and black officials.

With the initiation of MSD, an opportunity to exercise control of a particular area presented itself and, in effect, a black administrative enclave emerged amidst a predominately white central office staff. The MSD could well have been the first opportunity that blacks had to reassert their previous control over top-level administrative machinery. Researchers should investigate whether or not the staffing of MSD was an attempt to break the white monopoly on policy-making and to boost black leadership into decision-making posts.

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These conclusions and speculations suggest the complex interaction of reformer plans with school organizations as well as the difficulty in making assertions about why school systems change. Too often periods of reaction follow closely periods of reform; too often the former periods fail to understand the complexity of what happened in bursts of reform spirit; too often hope becomes despair, activism becomes benign neglect. If what happened is carefully examined in its context, it need not inevitably follow, one period after another.

Chapter 5

METHODOLOGY

This study used two different approaches. First, the reconstruction of the origin and development of the Model School Division; second, the analysis of survey instruments administered to MSD school officials. How each was done and the problems that arose will be discussed.

Reconstruction of the MSD. The material in Chapters 1 and 2 came from interviews and written sources of information.

In-depth interviews with twenty former school officials, anti-poverty executives and significant decision-makers were held.[1] Interviews ranged from a half-hour to two and a half hours in length; the median length was one hour. The interviews were structured around two or three stimulus questions emphasizing policy issues particular to the agency the individual worked for. Quite often, the conversation drifted far beyond the original question; the interviewer seldom halted the drift. Verbatim notes were taken. Two individuals granted permission to tape interviews.

Written sources were drawn from public and private records. A listing can be found in Appendix B.

Survey Instrument Analysis. The survey population was twenty-six principals and central office administrators of the Model School Division. Two former MSD administrators were added to the population because of the role they played in the MSD and their separation from MSD was within the previous six months. The number of respondents was limited due to restriction placed upon the research by the D.C. schools.[2]

The twenty-six administrators were surveyed in their offices over a three-week period in April and May, 1972. Although all had received the letter of introduction from the MSD Assistant Superintendent only half had read it and only half of those had read the instrument. The format was for the researcher to introduce himself and the purpose of the research. After a few words about the research, confidentiality was assured. No names were to be reported. The instrument was then described.

The next step was to ask each of the questions. Verbatim notes were taken. Occasionally questions would be asked of the respondent to clarify a point, or re-state a conclusion or review what was said. Sessions lasted between fifteen minutes to one hour, with the median time taking between thirty and thirty-five minutes. Only two lasted fifteen minutes; four took over an

hour. Respondents' answers were typed and given numbers to guarantee anonymity. Judges, both lay and educators, were selected to evaluate responses along ten scales, especially constructed for this analysis.

Problems of Methods Used.

1. What influence did interviewer have upon respondent?

The interviewer was known to all respondents as a former central office administrator in charge of staff development, and a former MSD official who had returned to the classroom.

To the twenty-six MSD administrators, this awareness probably influenced some respondents to make points about staff development that they might not have made had there been another interviewer. But even that assertion is questionable since the concept of staff development had become part of the working educational vocabulary in the D.C. schools. Surprisingly, even this is speculative since the administrators showed little sensitivity to training. Three administrators were clearly edgy about the interviewer as an interviewer: is he spying? What answers does he really want? Two principals outright refused to be surveyed.

On the other hand, ten respondents showed a positive, willing enthusiasm to talk about reform, past efforts to change the school, past shared experiences, etc. One guess is that my participation in the MSD for a number of years may have encouraged the kind of confidence that outside researchers find difficult to establish in urban public schools.

For the in-depth interviews to reconstruct the history of the MSD, previous participation in MSD and working relationships with all those interviewed seemed to engender confidence in interviewees. Not one person refused an interview or showed reservations, indifference or hostility to the writer.

What influence did the race of the interviewer have on the respondent? The interviewer is white. Of 46 interviewed, 37 were black. That race had an influence, there is little doubt. The nature of the influence--positive or negative--and whether it can be separated out from what they knew of the writer as an administrator and teacher are very difficult, if not impossible, to discern. Would these problems have been avoided by a black investigator unknown to the respondents? Possibly. Perhaps the

tentative results of this study would encourage other researchers to test out the hypotheses and conclusions drawn from the limited population. It should be added, however, that the hostile climate for research within the D.C. schools, a climate that choked off numerous requests to conduct research, would have made it most difficult for outsiders, white or black, to gain permission for their investigation. It may well be that because the writer was a teacher granted a leave of absence by the Board of Education to do research, he was permitted to proceed although restricted by certain conditions.

2. How reliable can the reporting be from a participant in the reform being described and analyzed?

Without getting into an extended discussion of objectivity, the writer realizes that another researcher might well reach similar or contrary conclusions--hopefully someone would try. Reliability in interpretation cannot be judged, however, until other analyses of the MSD are undertaken by non-participants.

What has been written has been done, for the most part, by participants. Their writing, however, has dealt with only selected portions of the MSD. Devoting one chapter to the MSD, Joseph Turner's Making New Schools viewed it as a failed experiment. He located the flaw in the resistance and lack of imagination of school officials. His point of view stressed the importance of curriculum development and teacher-training. Gail Saliterman wrote of her experiences with the Advisory Committee as an experiment in citizen participation that never got anywhere. Mary Lela Sherburne has written extensively in analytical terms of her experience with the Innovation Team and in promotional terms of her science curriculum efforts. Norman Nickens will complete shortly his doctoral dissertation on the Model School Division.

A number of short graduate papers done at Howard University, the University of Maryland, and D.C. Teachers College have been written on the early years of the MSD. Written by teachers and administrators in the Division, most were superficial, dependent upon scattered interviews, MSD literature and newspaper clippings.

What made some participants' papers valid or invalid was not their involvement but their skills in running down materials, collecting, digesting and writing about them in a coherent manner. Involvement stimulated imagination, captured the

nuances of the heated moment, the compelling urgency of action; such imagination is often missing from accounts written by non-participants. While they bring apparent impartiality, they lose the feeling-ness of the moment. In the hands of participants possessed of skills to evaluate, imagination could be brought to bear upon the writing of historical analysis. For the distant past, involvement is impossible unless it can be recreated as Samuel Eliot Morison did in sailing a replica of Columbus's ship across the Atlantic--which is seldom done. For the immediate past, a participant's involvement can enrich the narrative and analysis. After all one of the best histories of all time was written by a cashiered general--Thuycidides' History of the Peloponnesian War. He was the exception. Too often participants write their accounts justifying their actions, beating their breast over their accomplishments or failures. Clearly, such ax-grinders are easy enough to discount. Participation, the writer feels, can be an important ingredient to an imaginative reconstruction of the past.

The other aspect of reliability is whether the facts are accurate. Error in factual reporting undermines reliability. Evaluation of this aspect must await others' analyses.

3. Does a half-hour extemporaneous discussion of an instrument yield useful data?

On the plus side, there was much less jargon and cliches in face-to-face interviews. While a few respondents were guarded in their replies, most were not. If anything, extemporaneity yielded rich detail that could be checked for consistency of response. Most important, is that the immediate quality of the interview tended to reduce the careful, prepared nature of replies to difficult questions. Moreover, most respondents read the stimulus for the first time in my presence and their answers seemed straightforward rather than cautious, restrained and guarded.

The problem with extemporaneity was that respondents would hop around, often free-associating as one idea tumbled out after another. Thus, a consistency of analysis was missing in many replies. Another problem was that the interview, taking place in the administrator's office, often reflected the hectic pace of a school principal's schedule even though time for the survey response had been carved out. On occasion, the pressures of the moment would creep into the respondent's analysis and details from that day would be used to make a point. While this gives immediacy to the reply, reflection and sober consideration are lost.

4. Did a composite description of an urban school system produce a response which would have been different were the description of D.C.?

In other words, would the responses have been different had the stimulus material been of Washington? The possibility exists; to protect against the possibility, the interviewer asked every respondent, toward the end of the half-hour, whether their answers would have been different had the description been of D.C. All but three said their answers would have been the same. The slipping in of local names and references in their responses corroborates this; the three who equivocated were guarded in all of their replies and answered questions similarly.

5. Do the positions of the survey respondents and the size of the sample influence the results?

The definition of leader was restricted to persons holding official positions in the MSD primarily because policy-making for the MSD was a closed process. Central office and field administrators played the major role in implementing and setting policy for the Division, especially so given the ambiguous principles laid down by the Board. Community representatives, teachers and informal leaders were not surveyed since they played a minor role deciding upon the direction MSD should take. The possibility that the writer missed some of the informal processes by which even closed policy-making is carried, nonetheless, exists. It is quite possible that the definition of "leader" should have been expanded. The small size of the sample did seriously influence the conclusions drawn. Because the D.C. school administration would not permit fifty administrators outside the MSD to be surveyed, no comparisons of reform perceptions could take place. At best, all that could be concluded is what MSD officials perceive about reform. Whether or not any differences exist between the two groups and the significance that would have must await other reseachers' determination and luck in securing access to that data.

6. Did the scales and judges' ratings meet expectations of researcher?

Pilots of the scales were carried out on small groups of people. They revealed ambiguity in language, obscure references and obvious gaps. Language was sharpened up, holes were filled but some problems remained. Some of the terminology in three of the scales proved troublesome to the judges; more consistency in poles of the scales could have been introduced. In short, more work would have to be done on scales, were they to be used again.

The six judges that were selected received no training in using the scales. They were given an instruction sheet and told to ask questions if they ran into any difficulties. Perhaps more reliability could have been secured if there had been training of judges; that five of the scales showed high degrees of consistency is rewarding given the impressionistic, imprecise nature of the material and evaluation standards. Still, five scales, important to the predictions made could not be used because of inconsistent ratings. Mixed results leave mixed feelings.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

[1]David B. Cohen, "Education and Race: Research Needs and Opportunities," History of Education Quarterly, IX (Fall, 1969), pp. 281-282.

[2]Reform may be radical or reactionary. To replace or restore may be the driving force. The word is meant to embrace efforts of individuals and groups, inside or outside the school system, from the political right, center or left, to analyze problems, pose solutions and implement strategies to change the existing conditions under which schools operate. Reforms conceived as narrowly as curricular innovation or as broadly as societal change are included. The single most distinguishing mark of these efforts is rhetoric about improving schools, improving society.

[3]"Henry Barnard on the Need for Educational Reform," in Michael B. Katz, School Reform: Past and Present (Little, Brown, 1971), p. 10.

[4]Lawrence Cremin (Ed.), Horace Mann: The Republic and the School (Teachers College Press, 1957), p. 84.

[5]Cited in David B. Tyack, "From Village School to Urban System: A Political and Social History" (U.S. Office of Education, 1972), p. 26.

[6]Cited in Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School (Random House, 1964), p. 2.

[7]James B. Conant, Slums and Suburbs (McGraw-Hill, 1961), p. 2.

[8]Some exceptions would be David Rogers, 110 Livingston Street (Random House, 1968), Parts of Peter Shrag, Village School Downtown (Beacon Press, 1967). Less satisfying but still an attempt is Henry Resnick, Turning on the System (Pantheon, 1970).

[9]On the one hand, Washington has a predominately black student population, staff and Board of Education; it has the usual grim list of school problems--low achievement, rigid bureaucracy, lack of money, etc. All of these characterize most big city systems now or will in the immediate future. On the other hand, no state government, the federal presence, Congressional control of pursestrings, the lack of home rule mark D.C. school system as a peculiar institution.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL SCHOOL DIVISION

[1]Annual Report: Government of the District of Columbia, 1962, pp. 3-1, 3-2; Harry Passow, Toward Creating a Model Urban School System (Teachers College Press, 1967) pp. 84, 173, 181; Hobson v. Hansen Decision reprinted in Congressional Record, June 21, 1967, pp. H7662-63.

[2]Carl Hansen, Danger in Washington (Parker Publishing Company, 1968) p. 24.

[3]Ibid., p. VI.

[4]Ibid., p. 14.

[5]Constance M. Green, The Secret City (Princeton University Press, 1967) p. 304.

[6]Hansen, p. 15.

[7]Carl Hansen, Amidon Elementary School (Prentice-Hall, 1962), p. 66.

[8]Ibid., p. 151.

[9]Four tracks were introduced in high schools--Honors, College Preparatory, General and Basic; three in junior high and elementary. College Preparatory was omitted from the lower levels.

[10]Notes taken at city-wide Teachers' Conference, October 30, 1965.

[11]"Interview with Carl Hansen," U.S. News and World Report, July 24, 1967, pp. 41-42.

[12]Daniel Moynihan, Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding (Free Press, 1970), p. 36.

[13]Peter Marris and Martin Rein, Dilemmas of Social Reform (Atherton Press, 1967), p. 17.

[14]Moynihan, p. 64.

[15]Stephen Thernstrom, Poverty, Planning and Politics (Basic Books, 1969), p. 63.

[16]Delinquency, they theorized, is rooted in the environment, not in the individual. Few constructive opportunities are available to low-income youth. If the structure of opportunities was broadened, that is the elimination of social ethnic obstacles, as well as deepened, delinquency would decrease. Cloward and Ohlin were instrumental in creating MFY. See their book Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs (Free Press, 1960).

[17]Moynihan, p. 71

[18]Washington Post, December 27, 1964.

[19]Ibid., March 1, 1963.

[20]Washington Action for Youth, March, 1964, Volume I, p. 9.

[21]Ibid., p. 25.

[22]Ibid., p. 27.

[23]Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[24]Washington Post, March 28, 1963.

[25]All the major institutional actors in D.C. were interviewed except Carl Hansen. The rich record of the Superintendent's speeches, press conferences and Congressional testimony and books spell out in detail his views and frame of reference. In addition, the writer met the Superintendent a number of times while a teacher in the Model School Division; and observed his operations closely for four years. A remarkable consistency in the Superintendent's beliefs emerged. His last book, Danger in Washington, written after he left the Superintendency, also meshed tightly with his earlier views, although his characterizations of Washington officials were less than charitable. Ideally, the ex-Superintendent, who lives in California, should have been interviewed, but limited resources and time prevented that. The abundant written record, Hansen's consistent actions as Superintendent and Danger in Washington seemed to provide adequate resources for research.

[26]Memoranda to Superintendent Carl Hansen from Assistants John Koontz, Irene Hypps, John Riecks, etc., October-December, 1963, on microfiche.

[27]Telephone interview with Jack Goldberg, May 3, 1972.

[28]Board of Education Minutes, Volume 111, January 15, 1964, p. 32.

[29]Ibid., p. 35,

[30]Ibid., p. 41.

[31]Goldberg Interview.

[32]Hansen, Danger in Washington, p. 130.

[33]Sargent Shriver, Point of the Lance (Harper and Row, 1964), p. 99.

[34]List of participants at seminars appended to "Innovation and Experiment in Education," President's Panel on Educational Research and Development, March, 1964.

[35]Joseph Turner, Making New Schools (David McKay, 1971), p. 175.

[36]"Innovation and Experiment in Education," p. 37.

[37]Interview with Norman Nickens, June 9, 1972; interviews with Joseph Turner, March 28 and April 10, 1972.

[38]Turner Interview, March 28, 1972.

[39]Superintendent's Report to Board of Education, June 11, 1964.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Hansen, pp. 128-129.

[43]Nickens Interview.

[44]Hansen, p. 134.

[45]Washington Post, August 11, 1964.

[46]For almost a year and a half, Nickens continued to work out of the Franklin Building and Hansen's office; for at least five months after his appointment, Nickens continued to get key letters countersigned by the Superintendent; and not until early 1966 did separate embossed stationery appear. The term "Sub-System" gradually was used less and less and the word "Division" replaced it by 1967.

[47]Washington Post, August 19, 1964.

[48]Dr. Paul Cooke, initially appointed Director of the "inner-city target area program" was shifted sideways, given a new title and asked to work under Nickens. He spent most of his time drawing up proposals to be submitted to UPO. Most of the WAY and District proposals were reworked to fit OEO and Ford requirements for funding. He left the Division in July, 1965 to return to the District of Columbia Teachers College.

[49]J. Bernard Everett, Assistant Superintendent, Newton, Massachusetts; Roderick F. McPhee, Assistant Professor of Education, Harvard University; Donald P. Mitchell, Executive Secretary, New England School Development Council; David V. Tiedeman, Professor of Education, Harvard University; Dean K. Whitla, Director of the Office of Tests, Harvard University.

[50]"Model School System," a preliminary report, September 15, 1964, pp. 16-17. Hereafter called the Harvard Report, as it was known in the school system.

[51]Ibid., p. 19.

[52]Ibid.

[53]"Innovation and Experiment," p. 38.

[54]Harvard Report, p. 26.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Appointed by the Superintendent, President of the Board of Education, and Director of the United Planning Organization, the members represented a variety of interests and backgrounds. One member who was elected chairman was Chief Judge of the District Court of Appeals. Two were members of the Board of Education. Two were professors at Howard University. One was head of the local Urban League; another was an officer in the national parent-teacher association. A prominent philanthropist and three practicing professionals were also members. Of the thirteen, only two lived in the Cardozo area, a minister and a housewife. Half of the committee was black. Its most active members were the Judge, two Howard professors, one member of the Board and the Urban League Director. Interview with Gail Saliterman, April 14, 1972.

[57]Letter from Carl Hansen to Wesley Williams, President of the Board, August 4, 1964.

[58]Letter from Donald Mitchell, Chief Consultant, to William Grinker, United Planning Organization, October 26, 1964.

[59]Gail Saliterman, "Citizen Participation in an Urban School System: The Washington Case," in Barry Passett and Edgar Cahn, Citizen Participation (New Jersey Community Training, 1970), p. 164.

[60]Ibid., p. 166.

[61]Interview with Louise Steele, April 14, 1972.

[62]Letter from David Bazelon to Wesley Williams, November 20, 1964.

[63]Gail Saliterman shaped the first in-service institute held for MSD teachers, the subsequent summer in-service training in four curriculum areas, and the imaginative follow-up program. She coordinated the use of consultants, did much of the leg work along with Mrs. Barbara Hazel, an Assistant Director of the Model School Division. Her constant negotiations with MSD staff, UPO staff and outside consultants,however, could not reverse the powerlessness of the Council.

[64]Letter from Louise Steele to David Bazelon, October 6, 1965. Hansen scribbled "good" on bottom of his carbon copy.

[65]Letter to Congressmen Roman Pucinski and Adam Clayton Powell from David Bazelon, December 15, 1965.

[66]By September, 1965, Hansen had gotten Board approval for Nickens to assign teacher and administrative personnel within the Division.

[67]U.S. Government, "Hearings Before the Task Force on Poverty in the District of Columbia," Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, 89th Congress, October 7-8, 12, 26-27 and January 13, 1966, p. 528.

[68]Nickens Interview.

[69]Superintendent's Report, June 11, 1964.

[70]"Joint News Release," September 29, 1964, p. 1.

[71] Ibid., p. 2.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Memorandum from Paul Cooke to Norman Nickens, January 3, 1966.

[74] "Model School System Submission of Education Proposals," November, 1964, p. 3.

[75] Ibid., p. 5.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Five pre-school centers funded by the Presidents Committee on Juvenile Delinquency had quietly begun in early October. On February 8, 1965, Senator Robert Kennedy wrote Hansen asking why MSD had not begun their programs. Hansen replied a few days later: "It is my belief that the delays which have prevented the start of action programs of the MSD have not been inordinate. The United Planning Organization and the school system have worked very closely to develop programs and, as a result, a relationship of unparalled quality has been established that is contributing to the innovative quality of the projects already developed for the MSD...."; (Letter from Carl Hansen to Robert Kennedy, February 12, 1965).

[78] Washington Post, July 19, 1965.

[79] Saliterman, p. 165.

[80] Dr. Jerrold Zachiarias and Dr. Philip Morrison, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Dr. Benjamin Nichols and Dr. Frances Hawkins, Educational Services Incorporated; Dr. Martin Deutsch, Institute for Developmental Studies; Dr. Roald Campbell, University of Chicago; Dr. Walter Waetjen, University of Maryland; and Clark.

[81] Model School Division Advisory Committee, "Strategy for Change," June, 1966, p. 46.

[82]Letter from Kenneth Clark to David Bazelon, December, 1964.

[83]"Model School System Submission," November, 1964, pp. 1, 3.

[84]Ibid., pp. 14, 24, 28.

[85]Two were well established, D.C. Schools and District government; and two were brand new, UPO and OEO.

[86]Washington Evening Star, April 25, 1965.

[87]Up to this point, Nickens could not hire a teacher, shift a principal, buy a pencil or suspend a pupil directly. If he wanted to any of these things, he had to request that action from the appropriate Assistant Superintendent or get Hansen's signature.

[88]Washington Post, September 1, 1965.

[89]Superintendent's Circular 99, October 1, 1965.

[90]"Superintendent's Report to Board," September 22, 1965.

[91]Board of Education Minutes, Vol. 114, pp. 27-28.

[92]Journal of Gail Saliterman, October 6, 1965.

[93]Washington Post, November 1, 1965.

[94]Both grew up a block apart from one another in Anacostia; they were "good friends," words both used in interviews. They went to Dunbar High graduating a year apart. Coincidentally, both chose the same motto--a line from one of Paul Laurence Dunbar's poems, to summarize their beliefs: "Keep a-pluggin' away." Liber Anni, 1936, 1937.

[95]Goldberg Interview.

[96]Interview with James Banks, May 5, 1972.

[97]Washington Post, December 27, 1964.

[98]Ibid., October 31, 1965, February 24, 1966, April 24, 1967.

[99]Ibid., January 25, 1967.

[100]Ibid., January 25, 1967.

[101]Banks Interview.

[102]Ibid.

[103]Interview with Irene Hypps, April 6, 1972.

[104]Interview with Diane Sternberg, April 7, 1972.

[105]Saliterman Journal, July 13, 19, 1965.

[106]See Post, September 8, 1965. "For some time it has been clear that the limiting factor in the campaign against poverty is neither want of money nor want of ideas. It is a dearth of community leadership and administrative skills...."

[107]Memorandum from Sy Rotter to UPO Task Force on Education, March 11, 1966.

[108]Ibid., p. 4. One was the Cardozo Project in Urban Teaching, a teacher-training program located in three MSD schools. It aimed to attract and train liberal arts graduates (mostly Peace Corps returnees) to teach in one year's time. The program became a model for the National Teacher Corps; the other program was a junior high vocational curriculum.

[109]Ibid., p. 2. The D.C. Schools received over five million in Title I in November, 1965. Of that about 10% was earmarked for MSD, although the Cardozo area had more than 20% of the city's poor.

[110] Ibid., p. 4. The Task Force urged continued support for the pre-school program in MSD.

[111] Sternberg Interview.

[112] "Summary of Model School Division Per Pupil Expenditures for Elementary and Secondary School Pupils by School Year," D.C. Public Schools Finance Office, 1968, p. 1

[113] Memorandum from Norman Nickens to Carl Hansen, November 14, 1966.

[114] Memorandum from Diane Sternberg to Hal Witt, January 24, 1967.

[115] Memorandum from Metropolitan Citizens Advisory Council to UPO Board of Trustees, April 13, 1967.

[116] Washington Evening Star, April 23, 1967.

[117] Banks Interview.

[118] The Star and News generally supported Hansen; the Afro-American blew hot and cold depending upon whether the issue was racially defined; when the Track system became a racial issue, the Afro opposed Hansen.

[119] This six-month survey of events was drawn from news articles in the Post, Star, and Afro-American.

[120] Mary Lela Sherburne and Robert Ellis of the General Learning Corporation informally advised Nickens on a variety of issues, both substantive and strategic. The June, 1967 report was conceived and written, in large part, by the two. (Interview with Robert Ellis, April 17, 1972).

[121] See Passow Report for warm endorsement of MSD, pp. 373-382.

[122] Board of Education Minutes, Vol. 118, June 26, 1967, p. 2.

[123]"A Report to the Board of Education on the Model School Division," June, 1967, p. 5.

[124]Ibid., p. 9.

[125]Board of Education Minutes, Vol. 118, p. 16.

[126]Ibid., p. 17.

[127]Ibid., p. 18.

[128]Washington Evening Star, June 27, 1967.

[129]The brainchild of Mary Lela Sherburne, a Washington administrator for the Newton, Massachusetts Education Development Center and confidante to Norman Nickens, the Innovation Team gained publicity and achieved solid gains in helping classroom teachers shift their instruction to more open, inquiry-oriented methods. Also much emphasis was placed upon teacher sensitivity to black culture. See section "Model School Division: Eight Years Later."

CHAPTER 2

WHY DID THE MSD DEVELOP THE WAY IT DID?

[1]Marris and Rein, p. 207.

[2]See Marris and Rein, Dilemmas of Social Reform (Atherton, 1967) and Moynihan, Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding (Free Press, 1969), Chapters 2, 4, 5.

[3]Cited in Marris and Rein, p. 164.

[4]Washington Post, May 23, 1963.

[5]Specific details to support these and other conclusions in this chapter were described in the previous chapter.

[6]Interview with John Koontz, April 20, 1972.

[7]Jerrold Zacharias, a member of the President's Science Advisory Committee and Chairman of the Panel was intimately involved in a number of curriculum reform efforts.

[8]Until 1968, Board members had been chosen by federal District Court judges. Appointments most often went to elderly Republicans of both races who would seldom disagree with the Superintendent. In 1966, three younger opponents to both Tracking and Hansen's policies were appointed to the Board. See Post editorial, July 6, 1967.

[9]Hansen, p. 129.

[10]Steele Interview.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Budget statistics taken from "Summary of MSD Per Pupil Expenditures for Elementary and Secondary School Pupils by School Year," 1968, p. 1.

[13]Turner, p. 177.

[14]Nickens remembered when Hansen resigned. "When he was going to resign, I urged him not to. He turned to me and said, 'Norman, I appreciate your feelings and your support, but I have made up my mind.' " Interview June 9, 1972.

[15]Nickens Interview.

[16]Hansen, p. 135.

[17]U.S. Government, Hearings and Reports, 88th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 5, p. 321.

[18]Ibid., 89th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 5, p. 707.

[19]Speech by Norman Nickens to Teachers Institute, November 3, 1964.

[20]Letter from Norman Nickens to James Banks, March 29, 1965.

[21]"Projects for Funding: Model School Division Submission to United Planning Organization," November, 1965, p. 3.

[22]The exception would be where schools hire poor people in the neighborhood. One thrust of the paraprofessional movement was exactly the economic benefits that would flow to the poor from hiring them to work in the schools.

[23]A number of critics question whether schools can ever teach children basic skills; they also question the strength of the relationship between school achievement and future income. The most recent are Christopher Jencks, Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America (Basic Books, 1972), and Colin Greer, The Great School Legend (Basic Books, 1972). On the other hand, James Guthrie, Henry Levin, et. al. Schools and Inequality (1970), presents data showing the potency of school in determining future income, political behavior, etc. The evidence is murky on either side, and one can argue persuasively from either position.

[24]One could speculate as to why more emphasis was placed upon schools rather than adult employment opportunities or upon pre-schoolers rather than teenagers. The vulnerability of the school system as compared to corporate interests or less volatile tots over hard-core unemployed suggest political compromises--to no one's surprise. See Daniel Moynihan, Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding, Chapter 5.

[25]Washington Action for Youth, Vol. I, p. 43.

[26]Kenneth B. Clark and Jeannette Hopkins, A Relevant War Against Poverty (Harper and Row, 1968), p. 31. A fuller discussion of this confusion in meaning is found in Chapter 8 of Moynihan and Chapter 4 of Joseph Kershaw, Government Against Poverty (Brookings, 1970).

[27]"Innovation and Experiment," p. 37.

[28]"Projects for Funding," November, 1965, p. 78.

[29]Minutes of Panel on Educational Research and Development Seminar, May 26, 1964, p. 11.

[30]The Panel report used it both ways; "the first is the development of models, of something tangible to show what can be done...." and "model subsystem." (Innovation and Experiment," pp. 5, 37). This is not semantic nit-picking. Imprecision in the formulation of reform often results in uncertainty and stumbling during implementation. When that stumbling involves children and millions of dollars, imprecise usuage--particularly if the ambiguity is swampy--is often used by decision-makers to go ahead and do what they planned to do anyway.

[31]There was one reference. "Some parents may interpret it as a device to use their children as guinea pigs. Consequently, provision must be made to enable parents who do not want to participate to transfer their children to other schools." "Memo to Participants in Model School Systems," July 7, 1964, p. 14. From the writer's experience, experiments on black children were a clear-cut issue in WAY pilot projects between 1963-1965. It gained in importance as more federal projects penetrated the system.

[32]"Proposal for Model School Systems in an Experimental Program of Community Projects for Slums and Rural Depressed Areas, March 17, 1964": Minutes on "Seminars on Education for the Deprived and Segregated" for September, 1963 and June, 1964."

[33]Saliterman, p. 174.

[34]"Five Year Report," Model School Division, 1970, p. 1.

[35]For the first time, a panel of federal judges, sitting in for the ill Judge George Hart, Jr., appointed to the Board three younger, liberal opponents of Hansen. Their vigorous opposition to the Track Plan forced Hansen to modify the program.

[36]Marris and Rein make this point in describing the shortcomings of community action programs in the mid-60's; school reform efforts share similar short-comings.

[37]Robert Dahl, Who Governs (Yale University Press, 1961).

[38]Henry Resnick, Turning On the System (Pantheon, 1970).

[39]"Strategy for Change," Advisory Committee, June, 1966.

CHAPTER 3

THE MODEL SCHOOL DIVISION: EIGHT YEARS LATER

[1]"Model School Division: Reorganization Plan," March, 1968, p. 1-3.

[2]Ibid.

[3]"The Model School Division in a Capsule," 1969, no page number.

[4]"Five Year Summary," September, 1970, p. 12.

[5]Ibid., p. 24.

[6]Especially, there was curriculum development in black content; still retained were the original ties with science, math and social studies programs introduced the Summer of 1965 in the first teachers' institute by Gail Saliterman and Mary Lela Sherburne.

[7]Whether or not the MSD improved students' reading is difficult to determine. One evaluation in February, 1968 flatly stated that "MSD elementary schools are no better nor worse than similar schools outside the Division in performance on standardized reading tests." ("Research on Evaluation of Programs in Model School Division," John T. Daily and Clinton A. Neyman, Jr., GWU Educational Research Project, p. 2). Yet two years later, system-administered Sequential Tests of Education Progress (STEP), revealed that MSD scores exceeded city levels at the fourth grade and was equal to the rest of the city for the sixth grade. For those students who were in the Division for at least four years "scores show consistent improvement in both reading and mathematics." (Five Year Summary, pp. 46-47). Due to mobility, however, the group that achieved was a small sample. Clouding the picture even further were the results of the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) given in November, 1969. MSD, compared to similar schools elsewhere in the city, did poorly. (Post, December 2, 1970).

Reading achievement is only part of the larger question discussed in Chapter 2 concerning the difficulty of establishing clear criteria by which the Division could be measured against. None had been set initially. Should the MSD mixed record on reading be the standard by which success or failure is determined?

[8]Due to budget cuts, the Team was terminated in 1971.

[9]Mary Lela Sherburne, Teaming: Organizing for Change in the Schools (U.S. Office of Education, 1971), pp. 3-4.

[10]George B. Thomas and James M. Jones, Innovation Teams: Operating Principles (U.S. Office of Education, 1971), p. 81.

[11]Ibid. and H. R. Cort, et. al. An Evaluation of the Innovation Team (Washington School of Psychiatry, 1969).

[12]Sherburne, p. 102.

[13]Ibid., p. 107.

[14]In February, 1970 Board President Anita Allen convinced New York Psychologist Dr. Kenneth Clark to present to the Board a design calling for a Reading Mobilization Year in which all instruction and curriculum in elementary and junior high schools would focus upon basic skill improvement. Differentiated staffing, teacher accountability for student achievement, academic use of competition, staff development for school executives were other significant pieces to the design. The Board approved the plan. The next month, they selected Hugh Scott to implement it.

[15]Within this context, Scott's announcements during the Spring of 1972 that central office principals and administrators would be denied tenure in his new decentralization plans and the rumor that refused to die about MSD being cut into pieces and distributed to the other proposed regions both angered and depressed the MSD leaders the writer surveyed in April and May, 1972. Neither the announcements or rumors were accurate. No such action on administrators had been taken nor had the MSD been subdivided by December, 1972. Scott's plan called for the incorporation of the MSD intact as one of the decentralized regions.

[16]Eighteen were principals; eight were central office administrators. Two principals refused to participate in the survey. The total MSD leader population was twenty-eight. See section on "Methodology" for more details on the group.

[17]Teacher involvement in policy-making was limited to committee work, e.g. Reorganization of MSD, reading and staff development committees. The Innovation Team had engineered a wider role for teachers during its existence; nonetheless, the role remained advisory. Similarly, community involvement in policy-making was advisory. The mechanism was the Community Advisory Council established in 1969. In short, the closed policy-making process of the MSD roughly mirrored the larger system's process.

[18]Clearly, all administrators were not equal in influence. Nickens consulted with certain ones; Gilbert Diggs, Nickens successor, consulted with others. Who were or were not influential was not investigated.

[19]This hypotehsis was severely limited by the conditions imposed upon this researcher by the Superintendent in April, 1972. See Chapter on "Methodology" for details.

[20]Passow, p. 173.

[21]Two sources were used to calculate agreement between judges. George Ferguson, Statistical Analysis in Psychology and Education, (McGraw-Hill, 1971), pp. 312-315. Sidney Siegel, Non-parametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences (McGraw-Hill, 1956), pp. 236-239.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND SPECULATIONS

[1]Whether or not the system's changes had positive impact upon children or whether these changes were gutted of their substance as they became institutionalized--both extremely important issues--are beyond the scope of this study.

[2]Marilyn Gittell, et. al., Investigation of Fiscally Independent and Dependent City School Districts (U.S. Office of Education, 1967), p. 127.

[3]Michael W. Kirst, "The Growth and Limits of Federal Influence in Education" (Stanford School of Education, 1972), p. 21.

[4]As mentioned earlier, there were definite similarities with administrators in the rest of the system except for higher MSD percentages of Dunbar and D.C. Teacher College graduates.

[5]Of the thirty administrators in MSD in 1972, six had served prior to the establishment of the sub-system; all others were chosen through the process described here.

[6]Interviews with MSD staff members. Anonymity in these interviews was a condition placed on the use of quotes.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

[1]See Appendix A.

[2]See Appendix C.

[3]See Appendix D.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES FOR HISTORY OF MSD *

1.	Dr. Irene Hypps	Director of Education for UPO
2.	Mrs. Diane Sternberg	Education specialist for UPO
3.	Dr. Hy Frankel	Deputy Director of UPO
4.	Mr. James Banks	Executive Director of UPO
5.	Dr. Paul Cooke	Director of Model School Division
6.	Dr. Joseph Turner	Staff Assistant of President's Panel on Science and active in establishing MSD
7.	Miss Gail Saliterman	Committee executive assistant to MSD Advisory Committee
8.	Dr. Franklin Edwards	Member of the MSD Advisory Committee
9.	Mrs. Louise Steele	Member of the D.C. Board of Education and member of the MSD Advisory Committee
10.	Mr. Wesley Williams	President of the D.C. Board of Education
11.	Dr. Euphemia Haynes	President of the D.C. Board of Education
12.	Mr. Robert Ellis	Consultant to the MSD
13.	Mr. William Rumsay	Liason between the D.C. schools and WAY
14.	Dr. Jack Goldberg	Director of WAY
15.	Dr. Myrna Levine	Research associate of WAY
16.	Mr. William Simons	President of the Washington Teachers Union
17.	Mr.John Koontz	Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools
18.	Mrs. Barbara Hazel	Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent of the MSD
19.	Mr. Norman Nickens	Assistant Superintendent of Model School Div.
20.	Mrs. Grace Johnson	Secretary to the Director of the Model School Division

* - Positions were held between 1963-1967.

APPENDIX B

Prior to receiving word of the U.S. Office of Education grant, I had been granted by the Board of Education, a leave of absence from my teaching position and had obtained informal approval for the research from the Assistant Superintendent in charge of the Model School Division. On March 24, 1972, when the notification of Grant document arrived, I had already submitted information about my proposed research to the MSD head. He indicated that there shouldn't be any problem but he would contact the Assistant Superintendent of Research and Evaluation to clear it. This he did. I had also submitted a description of the research to that division on March 21st and when requested to submit additional data, I did.

Instead of approving my request, the Assistant Superintendent of Research and Evaluation decided to take the matter up with the Superintendent. She and the Assistant Superintendent of the MSD met with the Superintendent. On April 18th, I received a letter*, disapproving my research project completely, that is, the historical reconstruction of the MSD and the survey of seventy-five administrators inside and outside the MSD.

I objected strenuously and asked for explanations so I wrote the Superintendent immediately. I indicated to him that I would have to contact the Board of Education and the United States Office of Education to inform them that I would not be able to complete my project for which I had received a leave of absence and a Research Grant. A few days later, on April 20th, while in the Presidential Building, (Central Administrative Office of the School System) on other business, I was summoned to the Superintendent's Office to meet with him and the Assistant Superintendent of Research and Evaluation. There the Superintendent aired his objections to the research, e.g. takes up too much time of administrators, had not obtained prior approval, a white researcher in a black setting, etc. He pointed out what he felt were shortcomings in the research design as well as the limited usefulness of the study's conclusions for both himself and the school system. I answered the best I could but it was difficult since the Superintendent seldom permitted me to complete what I was saying. After forty-five minutes, the Superintendent decided to approve the historical reconstruction of the MSD that I had proposed but the decision on my survey of seventy-five school administrators he delegated to a panel of three administrators: the Associate Superintendent of Instruction, the Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel and a Special Assistant to the Superintendent.

Two hours later I met with the panel, chaired by the Assistant Superintendent of Research. We discussed the research design for an hour and a half. They examined the hypotheses and the possible results of the study for the school system. The panel approved the research but laid down three conditions:

*Copies of all correspondence are in the writer's possession.

- eliminate the sample of administrators outside the MSD
- re-write the description of a big city school system so as to remove the details that would be easily interpreted as Washington, D.C.
- submit the re-written stimulus to the Assistant Superintendent of Research.

I agreed to these conditions. A week later, April 27, I received a letter from the Assistant Superintendent approving the project.

APPENDIX C

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APPENDIX D

INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES

A number of school administrators were asked to respond to questions dealing with a fictitious description of an urban school system. The "Schools of Morris" document described a system having the usual list of social, economic and political problems common to most big cities in the 1970's. The purpose of this document was to stimulate the administrator's thinking on reform. Because the description contained many items similar to what has occurred in Washington, D.C.--where they serve--most administrators answered the questions with the D.C. schools in mind.

Each administrator was asked the following questions:

1. In your opinion, what are the main problems of this school system? Why do you feel they are the main ones?

2. If you were in a position to recommend changes, which ones would you recommend? Why?

3. If you were in a position to take steps to implement the changes you recommended, which steps would you take and why?

4. Would your answers have been different had this description been of Washington?

The verbatim responses and scales to rate the responses are enclosed. I would appreciate it very much if you could follow each of the directions. If there are any questions, please contact me.

- Before you begin using the scales, please read through <u>all</u> the responses (no. 1 to no. 28). After reading all responses, shuffle the papers so that the order you initially read them in is now changed. Now, please rate <u>each</u> respondent's answers on the scales provided to you.

- Make a judgment for each scale by circling the appropriate number below the line. It is possible that some responses may not fit any of the scales, or that some scales may have nothing to do with responses. If so, mark the scale Non-Applicable.

- In making your judgment, try to assess the direction of the person's thinking rather than the specific mention of an item. Occasionally, contradictory points will be made and, in that case, you must make a judgment based upon the general line of thinking for each respondent.

- Try to make an impressionistic judgment, rather than one in which you minutely analyze the sentence and words.

- Please do not go back and compare responses. After you complete a respondent, turn it over and leave it.

- After you make a judgment on a scale (there are ten), circle A-B-C to indicate how confident you feel about your rating. This Confidence Rating is immediately below the seven point scale for each item.

Thank you very much for your help.